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# Art plagiarizes life the fiction and Diary of Anais Nin.

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ART PLAGIARIZES LIFE:  
THE FICTION AND DIARY OF ANAÏS NIN

by

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Brenda A. Ingratta

A Thesis  
submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies  
through the Department of English  
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at the University of Windsor

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## ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the relationship of Anaïs Nin's Diary (particularly Diary I) and her fiction to demonstrate the way Nin uses her art to plagiarize life. Although it may be said that all art plagiarizes life in the sense that any author inevitably employs fragments of his or her lived experience as the basis for fiction, it will be shown that Anaïs Nin seldom makes a "creative leap" where her fiction is concerned. Too often too much of it is merely copied from the Diary.

In a discussion of characterization in the Diary I and the fiction, we will observe Nin's lack of imagination as a fiction writer. A chronological survey of Nin's writing will reveal her firm reliance on her Diary portraits as the basis for fictional portraits; in her early novelette, "Winter of Artifice," we will consider the extensive similarity in the character of the father in the story to the actual portrait of her father, Joaquin Nin, as presented in the Diary. Furthermore, Cities of the Interior, which takes us through Nin's major period as a writer, contains two additional characters whom we will consider; it becomes evident that Nin uses her perceptions of Henry and June Miller as the model for the fictional counterparts of Jay and Sabina in the five-volume "continuous novel." Whereas the portrait of the father is practically copied from real life and transplanted into the fiction, Cities of the Interior will demonstrate

that, although Nin's fictional portraits are still rooted in reality, Nin has learned how to evoke the essence rather than the reality of the real-life model in her fictional portrait. Although we might suspect that Nin would free herself of such dependency on her Diary as she matures as a writer, we will finally note that even Collages, her final work of fiction, is not entirely free of the Diary's influence.

## DEDICATION

For all the women in my life--  
but especially for Phyllis Irene and Barbara



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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

One wonders what would possess a person to sit down each day or at least every few days to jot notes about himself or herself in a diary. There can be no simple solution to this problem; for as many diaries that exist there are as many individual reasons why it was ever begun, why it was maintained, and/or why it was stopped.

I can number only a few diarists in my circle of friends and acquaintances; I alternate between wondering why there aren't more and why there are any at all. When we live in a society that condemns diary-writing as an exercise in narcissism, how can we explain that there are still a good proportion of individuals who begin and continue the habit of keeping a diary?<sup>1</sup> Steven E. Kagle proposes a solution to this question:

The life of a diary is often born of a tension, a disequilibrium in the life of its author, which needs to be resolved or held in check. A journey, a new role, a spiritual crisis--these are some of the sources of tension that can bring about and sustain a diary. In some cases the tension represents a conflict between a pair of activities, motives, or goals. These conflicting elements may be represented in the diary as individual themes struggling for the diarist's attention. Whatever the tension and however great its disruptive effect on the diarist's life, it is a sustaining force

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<sup>1</sup>See Appendix I for a consideration of the available "how-to" books regarding diary writing.

for the diary. In a large number of cases the resolution of the tension, like the climax of a novel, signals the conclusion of the work.

However, in a large number of cases, the habit of keeping a diary, once it is begun, continues throughout the lifetime of the writer herself, to be concluded only with her death.

[It] seems to be that the inveterate diarist finds his daily journal the most satisfying form of self-expression; it is his outlet for an incurable urge to chatter to himself in writing. With only himself as audience, the writer can be perfectly open and sincere; he can indulge in gossip and even scandal without boring or harming anyone. He can even, like Pepys, confess his own secret faults and shortcomings with a frankness which would be impossible if an eavesdropper were present.

Although diarists usually maintain a degree of secrecy regarding their writing, they know only too well that private documents may one day become public property. With few exceptions, then, diarists seem compelled to justify their reasons for keeping a diary, partly for themselves and, perhaps, partly for posterity. In her article, "Diary Keeping As A Feminine Art Form," Canadian writer Claudia Christopherson explains why she keeps a journal:

In all these scribblings about why women keep journals, I have not answered the question personally. It would be simpler to explore why I compulsively indulge the habit. There is a plethora of reasons.

To maintain a sense of the continuity of the self, to keep in touch with the voice that remains constant beneath the persona, the role-mask. Mother, teacher, writer, mistress--without the journal, I would get lost.

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<sup>2</sup>Steven E. Kagle, American Diary Literature, 1620-1799 (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1979), p. 17.

<sup>3</sup>Vincent Waite, English Diaries and Journals (Exeter: A. Wheaton and Company, Ltd., 1952), pp. 16-17.

As an exercise in honesty. Role-playing always involves some degree of lying! In the journal the lies can be peeled away, one by one.

To think things through, to hammer out what I believe, to test my actions against my principles.

To give harmless vent to hostilities and other neurotic dislocations without damaging the people on whom they would otherwise be projected.

To wrestle with the demon neurosis and make sure it is at least an equal contest.

To explore madness itself, if need be, in a controlled form.

To encounter, confront, and come to terms with the shadow.

To capture experience in language, thus partly forestalling the erosion of time. To record epiphanies, moments of heightened awareness, thereby increasing the ability to see.

To obey the Socratic maxim: 'An unexamined life is not worth living.'

To have something to entertain me in my old age, when I am sure my memory will be even worse than it is now.

To provide raw material for fiction.

So that my children will have a record of their mother's subjective consciousness, to match their own objective one.

To dance and whirl, exult and tease, bitch and whine in my own private chamber, alone, companioned only by the music.

To experience directly my freedom, to have a 'room of one's own,' an utterly private space, inside one's head.

To play with observing myself from different perspectives--psychoanalytic, Marxist, religious (Zen). To be able to judge how far I have strayed from grace, however that is defined, as to discover the quickest shortcut back to it.

As an exercise, yes, in unabashed narcissism. 'I dote on myself, there is all that lot of me, and all so luscious.'

To learn how to let go. It is a liberating form, the journal, where one can experiment wildly,<sup>4</sup> having no heavier burden to bear than the paragraph.

Perhaps for the purposes of clarification, it should be explained here what is meant by the term "diary" or "journal."

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<sup>4</sup>Claudia Christopherson, "Diary Keeping As A Feminine Art Form," Branching Out V, ii (April, 1978): 32.

Stationery shops carry the well-bound, usually gilt-edged small books known as diaries which allow the writer four or five lines to write per day and supply a small gold key to lock the contents from the rest of the world. These little books are the presents given to adolescent girls at Christmas as a place for them to record their childhood infatuations. More often than not, a typical entry is supposed to read, "Dear Diary..." (as though one is actually writing to the book and not to a person at all) and the few lines are filled with a few ultimately meaningless comments, meaningless because nothing of real value can be expressed in such a small space.<sup>5</sup> As Anaïs Nin herself points out, these "diaries" are "only calendars."<sup>6</sup> An obvious difference between calendars and diaries "should perhaps be between recording things you may need to remember, and recording things you want to remember."<sup>7</sup>

Although North Americans tend to use the words interchangeably as if diaries and journals are essentially the same, a distinction ought to be made. Basically, the English word "diary" is used to describe a daily record book in which most diarists simply list the occurrences of that particular day; the French word "journal", however, describes not only the

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<sup>5</sup>Except, of course, by poets whose intention it is to say as much as possible in as little space as possible. The average person, however, cannot squeeze profundity of thought into four mere lines.

<sup>6</sup>In A Woman Speaks: The Lectures, Seminars, and Interviews of Anaïs Nin, edited with an introduction by Evelyn J. Hinz (Chicago: The Swallow Press, Inc., 1975), p. 164.

<sup>7</sup>Robert A. Fothergill, Private Chronicles: A Study of English Diaries (London: Oxford University Press, 1974), p. 37.

events of the day, it comments further on thoughts, emotions, and even dreams so that the writer explores the internal world of the self as well as the external world. A journal, then, is a written form which furnishes the individual with an instrument of self-exploration, a yardstick to measure self-growth, a record of insights, self-examinations, and revelations. In order to eliminate possible confusion, the word "diary" will nevertheless be used throughout this paper as it is the word used in North America to describe Nin's book of the self, but it should be understood in the sense of a journal.

One begins a diary, as I understand the word, perhaps when one avoids an affected salutation to a book and instead appreciates the fact that one is actually writing to oneself, for oneself. Some diarists restrict themselves only to particular topics -- there are scientific diaries and travel diaries, for example. Both Evelyn Waugh and Graham Greene, who kept notebook records of their travels, wrote not only travel books, but fiction inspired by the places they had been. There are, however, a good number of diaries where the writer describes events, records dreams, sketches characters, and becomes introspective. Henry James believed that the quality of a work of art will always be the quality of the mind of its creator;<sup>8</sup> in other words, the quality of the content of a diary is solely dependent upon the quality of the mind guiding the pen across the page, dependent upon the devotion to writing and the truth. If one lies in a diary, one lies only

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<sup>8</sup> As quoted by Christopherson, p. 30.

to oneself; thus for all the carefully censored diaries there are as many delightfully honest ones as well. These are the kind where the writer is not afraid to peel back the layers of the onion to expose the soul, to find the real person lying beneath the superficial mask, to learn to love oneself so that the love of others can be accepted and returned.

Where diary writing is concerned, there emerge two chief exemplars of the form. The first, Samuel Pepys (1633-1703), whom many will argue as the greatest diarist of his or any other time, left his diary written in his secret shorthand among his personal papers at the time of his death. Pepys' exercise in self-biography was begun in 1659, when he was 26, and continued until 1669 when Pepys realized his eyesight was failing him. In his last diary entry, dated May 31, 1669, Pepys writes:

And thus ends all that I doubt I shall ever be able to do with my own eyes in the keeping of my Journal, I being not able to do it any longer, having done now so long as to undo my eyes almost every time that I take a pen in my hand; and, therefore, resolve, from this time forward, to have it kept by my people in longhand, and must be contented to set down no more than is fit for them and all the world to know; or, if there be anything I must endeavour to keep a margin in my book open, to add, here and there, a note in shorthand with my own hand.

And so I betake myself to that course, which is almost as much as to see myself go into my grave; for which, and all the discomforts that will accompany my being blind, the good God prepare me!<sup>9</sup>

The Diary of Samuel Pepys provides a valuable history of a man and his world: a man who wrote of his actions, thoughts, and feelings at a time when his world witnessed such events as

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<sup>9</sup>Samuel Pepys, Diary, with an introduction and notes by G. Gregory Smith. (London: MacMillan and Co., Ltd., 1905), p. 755.



the Great Plague of 1665 and the Great Fire of London in 1666.<sup>10</sup> Yet Pepys' diary contains not only a record of the world around him, but the world within him, as Angus Ross relates:

His varied background of travel, intellectual interests, public office and experience make this an important document in the study of affairs and manners of his day, but his personal, candid revelations of aspects of his life make it a first-rate human document of great psychological interest.<sup>11</sup>

Also of great psychological interest is The Diary of Anaïs Nin, written by a woman who may well be called "the female counterpart to Samuel Pepys."<sup>12</sup> With the publication of not only a juvenile diary but several additional volumes spanning a period from 1914 to 1974, it becomes obvious that Anaïs Nin, if not the most well-known diarist of the twentieth century, is certainly the most prolific diary writer of her time.<sup>13</sup> Diary writing was originally a hobby which Nin began when she was only eleven but it became a habit which she continued for the rest of her life. In her late twenties, she became a writer of fiction and produced nine books in addition to a collection of criticism entitled D. H. Lawrence: An Unprofessional Study (1932); an analysis of the novel form en-

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<sup>10</sup>See Percival Hunt, Samuel Pepys In The Diary (Pittsburgh: The University of Pittsburgh Press, 1958), for an overview of the Diary. See also Margaret Willy, English Diarists: Evelyn and Pepys (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1963).

<sup>11</sup>David Daiches., ed., The Penguin Companion to Literature I: British and Commonwealth Literature (Great Britain: Penguin Books, 1971), p. 418. Sub verbo: Samuel Pepys by Angus Ross.

<sup>12</sup>Fothergill, p. 37.

<sup>13</sup>For an account on how Nin's Diary relates to the Japanese

titled The Novel of the Future (1969); and two collections of erotica: Delta of Venus (1977) and Little Birds (1979).

These latter two books were written for a collector of erotica and sold for a dollar a page. As editor Gunther Stuhlmann comments, "...only a few months after her death [the erotica] propelled her name for the first time onto the best-seller lists of Europe and of the United States -- an irony she would surely have appreciated."<sup>14</sup> During her later years and even after her death, it is still the Diary for which Nin is best remembered rather than her fiction. As Robert A. Fothergill says,

Of Boswell and Anaïs Nin it may be said, to paraphrase Oscar Wilde, that they put their talent into various undertakings, and their genius into recording their lives. They are unsurpassed because they are the only ones to treat diary-writing as truly their vocation.<sup>15</sup>

Or, as Daniel Stern adds,

Anaïs Nin put her excellent gifts into her series of novels--books like an unconscious feminine glance into the universal dream world. But her diaries have been written with a fuller commitment to the grand canvas of life, providing a richer surround for the characters and for the dilemmas in which they find themselves.<sup>16</sup>

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tradition of diary-keeping, see Catherine Broderick, "Anaïs Nin's Diary and the Japanese Literary Diary Tradition," Mosaic: A Journal for the Comparative Study of Literature and Ideas XI, ii (Winter, 1978): 177-189.

<sup>14</sup>Gunther Stuhlmann, ed., The Diary of Anaïs Nin, Volume VII: 1966-1974 (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1980), v.

<sup>15</sup>Fothergill, p. 12.

<sup>16</sup>Daniel Stern, "The Novel of Her Life: The Diary of Anaïs Nin, Volume IV: 1944-1947." The Nation, November 29, 1971. Reprinted in A Casebook on Anaïs Nin, edited by Robert Zaller (New York: Meridian Books, 1974), p. 154.

Like Anaïs Nin, Virginia Woolf displayed a particular concern for the actual form of the diary and a consideration of how she might evolve a style to suit her own purposes not only as a diarist but as a writer of fiction as well. In a long entry of A Writer's Diary, dated April 20, 1919, Virginia Woolf describes the pleasures and purposes of keeping a diary:

I got out this diary and read, as one always does read one's own writing, with a kind of guilty intensity. I confess that the rough and random style of it, often so ungrammatical, and crying for a word altered, afflicted (sic) me somewhat. I am trying to tell whichever self it is that reads this hereafter that I can write very much better; and take no time over this; and forbid her to let the eye of man behold it. And now I may add my little compliment to the effect that it has a slapdash and vigour and sometimes hits an unexpected bull's eye. But what is more to the point is my belief that the habit of writing thus for my own eye only is good practice. It loosens the ligaments. Never mind the misses and stumbles. Going at such a pace as I do I must take the most direct and instant shots at my object, and thus have to lay hands on words, choose them and shoot them with no more pause than is needed to put my pen in the ink. I believe that during the past year I can trace some increase of ease in my professional writing which I attribute to my casual half hours after tea. Moreover there looms ahead of me the shadow of some kind of form which a diary might attain to. I might in the course of time learn what it is that one can make of this loose, drifting material of life; finding another use for it than the use I put it to, so much more consciously and scrupulously, in fiction. What sort of diary should I like mine to be? Something loose knit and yet not slovenly, so elastic that it will embrace anything, solemn, slight, or beautiful that comes into my mind. I should like it to resemble some deep old desk, or capacious hold-all, in which one flings a mass of odds and ends without looking them through. I should like to come back, after a year or two, and find that the collection has sorted itself and refined itself and coalesced, as such deposits so mysteriously do, into a mould, transparent enough to reflect the light of our life, and yet steady, tranquil compounds with the aloofness of a work of art. The main requisite, I think on re-reading my old volumes, is not to play the part of censor, but to write as the mood comes or of anything whatever; since I was curious to find how I went for things put in haphazard, and found the significance to lie where I never saw it at the time. But looseness quickly becomes slovenly. A little effort is needed to

face a character or an incident which needs to be recorded. Nor can one let the pen write without guidance; for fear of becoming slack and untidy.<sup>17</sup>

Although Virginia Woolf never made a point of reading the diaries of other writers solely for ideas of what to write in her own book of the self, many individuals just beginning to keep a diary do make a serious study of the published diaries of famous and not-so-famous writers. After all, each diarist has her own approach to diary-writing and her own ideas of what should or should not be said; moreover, the examination of a diary such as Virginia Woolf's or Anaïs Nin's may inspire the fledgling diarist to attempt either a new form or a discussion of a topic not previously considered. In any conversation, even an elaborate monologue with oneself, one always keeps an eye out for something new to write about.

For the non-diarist, nevertheless interested in an author's personal philosophies and visions of life, the diary provides a remarkable link between the writer and her fiction. Distinct from other biographical sources, the diary gives the reader insights into the artistic temperament and the oftentimes agonizing process of becoming a writer, as seen through the eyes of the actual artist rather than by a remote biographer. A diary permits the reader to see and identify with the human being beyond her role as a writer.

Just as there is a fundamental difference between a diary and a calendar, so there is a dividing line which separates a

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<sup>17</sup>Virginia Woolf, A Writer's Diary (London: Triad/Panther Books, 1978), pp. 22-23.

diary from a writer's notebook.<sup>18</sup> A writer's notebook is not necessarily a diary, although a great number of diaries have been known to contain notebooks. A writer's notebook is not much different from an artist's sketchbook: the artist uses her sketches to plan the greater work she intends to do in oil on canvas; in her sketchbook she organizes her images. By the same token, a writer's notebook is where the writer collects and assembles her research which will eventually be transformed into her work of fiction. Notebooks are not kept with the intention of ever being published, for the most part, although a good many notebooks which have been published allow us a rare insight into the creative process of an individual writer.

In addition to an actual diary, Fyodor Dostoevsky kept a series of notebooks while he wrote his major works of fiction, works like Crime and Punishment and The Brothers Karamazov.

Edward Wasiolek describes the physical appearance of Dostoevsky's original notebooks:

His notebooks are in every respect working notebooks. They contain drawings, jottings about practical matters, doodling of various sorts, calculations about pressing expenses, sketches, and random remarks. The text itself is often scattered about the pages: there are crossings-out, insertions, marginal matter in great abundance, and writing slanted in various directions across the pages. Sometimes Dostoevsky begins in the middle of the page and fills in the righthand side before turning to the left. Sometimes he crosses out and puts the variant a-

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<sup>18</sup> Each writer operates in the way she is most comfortable; whether the writer is to use the diary as both a record book and a notebook for fiction or keeps two separate books for these matters depends on the individual writer. It should be noted that, in addition to the three published volumes of the Diary that Virginia Woolf kept for many years, there exist the notebooks that she used while planning her novels. These notebooks have not yet been published.

bove or below the crossed-out material or in the margin. In addition, he apparently used the notebooks in a random and unsystematic manner, skipping pages and then returning to the empty pages with different matter and even with comments on a different work. At times too he turned the notebooks upside down and proceeded from back to front.<sup>19</sup>

Nin herself admits that her diaries are, in a sense, notebooks or resource books for her novels and short stories. Indeed, it can come as no surprise that the two creative forms of the continuous diary and the fiction should come to influence one another, particularly when both of them were written simultaneously. As Anna Balakian points out:

The diary has creative perspective, the creative writing is drenched in lived experience. In fact, the diary and the creative work are like two communicating vessels, and the division is like an imaginary one; they feed each other constantly, the diary feeds the imagination with encounter and experience, the creative process invades the diary with its iridescence, transforming the perceptions of the author in regard to her sensory data and emotional reactions to events. Moreover, at times one has the feeling that the diary has literary structure as much and even more than the novel; if it reflects a life, it reveals, at least in the parts that have been published, chosen moments, chosen events, highlights rather than composites of personalities; the climate that the author breathes in the diary and that her characters breathe in the loose-fitting pattern of the novels derive from the same perspective.<sup>20</sup>

The extent to which Nin's Diary has influenced her fiction becomes apparent when one refers back and forth between all seven volumes of the Diary and the fiction. One cannot

<sup>19</sup>In "Introduction" to The Notebooks for Crime and Punishment by Fyodor Dostoevsky (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1967), p. 3.

<sup>20</sup>Anna Balakian, "The Poetic Reality of Anaïs Nin." Originally published as the Preface to the Anaïs Nin Reader, edited by Philip K. Jason (Swallow Press, 1973). Reprinted in A Casebook on Anaïs Nin, edited by Robert Zaller (New York: Meridian Books, 1974), p. 116.

help but experience a feeling of déjà vu where one wonders, "Haven't I read this somewhere before?" The following is a fine example of the way in which the diary material parallels the fiction. Early in Diary I, Nin writes about an evening spent with June Miller:

Tonight it is June who says, 'I want to dance with you.' It is June who leads me, she heavy and I light and willowy. We glide on the last beat of a jazz piece which is descending and gasping and dying. The men, in stiff evening shirts, stiffen even more in their chairs. The women close their lips tightly. The musicians smile, benign and malicious, rejoicing in the spectacle, which has the effect of a slap in the face of the pompous diners. They cannot help exclaiming that we are beautiful together. June dark, secret under the brim of her Greta Garbo felt hat, heavy-caped, tragic and pale, and I a contrast to her in every way. The musicians grin. The men feel insulted. At the table, a waiter is waiting to tell us we cannot dance again.<sup>21</sup>

The similarity of this diary excerpt to the scene from Ladders to Fire is unmistakable:

They danced together, the floor turning under them like a phonograph record. Sabina dark and potent, leading Lillian.

A gust of jeers seemed to blow through the place. A gust of jeers. But they danced, cheeks touching, their cheeks chalice white. They danced and jeers cut into the haze of their dizziness like a whip. The eyes of the men were insulting them, the eyes of men called them by the name the world had for them....

Now they danced mockingly, defiantly, as if they were sliding beyond the reach of man's hands, running like sand between their insults. They scoffed at those eyes which brimmed with knowledge for they knew the ecstasy of mystery and fog, fire and orange fumes of a world they had seen through a slit in a dream....

The waiter put his ham-colored hand on Sabina's bare arm: 'You've got to get out of here, you two!'<sup>22</sup>

<sup>21</sup>Anaïs Nin, The Diary of Anaïs Nin, Volume I: 1931-1934, edited with an introduction by Gunther Stuhlmann (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1966), pp. 145-146. All further references to the Diary will be cited in the text of the essay; the Roman numeral will refer to the specific volume and the Arabic numeral will refer to the page.

<sup>22</sup>Anaïs Nin, Ladders to Fire (Denver: Alan Swallow, 1959), pp. 121-122.

The similarity, of course, is not sheer coincidence. The descriptions of characters who first appear in the Diary as living, breathing individuals who have captured the interest of Anaïs Nin can oftentimes be found in her novels, the actual person turned into the fictive being. As Nin says, "Sometimes if I keep writing about a person who interests me, after a while I have a cumulative portrait. We don't think of our friends in that way, we see them a little bit here and a little bit there. Suddenly I see a total person, then I write the story."<sup>23</sup> In the aforementioned circumstance, the actual June Miller becomes the fictive Sabina. How ridiculous, then, that some critics should claim that all of the women in Nin's novels are really modelled after herself. Nin explains this in an interview:

That's not true. Each one of my novels is based on reality and in the Diary you can trace the origin of the characters. In the novels I began to make a composite character because I needed more expansion and sometimes reality restricted me and I didn't always want to follow the true development of a particular life. But there, of course, it was always my mind that was expressing itself through the building of these composites and that may be why they thought all these women were me. If you read the diaries you'll find the models for all these women but Lillian, whom I left as a fictional character.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup>Jody Hoy, "Out of the Labyrinth: An Interview," East West Journal, (August, 1974). Reprinted in In Favor of the Sensitive Man and Other Essays, by Anaïs Nin (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976), p. 79.

<sup>24</sup>Priscilla English, "An Interview with Anaïs Nin" New Woman Magazine (December, 1971). Reprinted in A Casebook on Anaïs Nin, edited by Robert Zaller (New York: Meridian Books, 1974), p. 191.

We note that one year later (1972) Nin contradicts her final statement. In an interview with Barbara Freeman ["A Dialogue with Anaïs Nin," Chicago Review XXIV, ii (1972): 29-35], Nin says, "...Lillian was taken from a real person. In the novels, all my characters are taken from reality, they are all



Naturally this final statement raises the following question: who are the models for Nin's fictional characters?

It is my intention in this paper to study Nin's method of characterization by focusing on her Diary record of three particular individuals who profoundly affected not only her life but her art: her father, Joaquin Nin; her fellow writer, Henry Miller; and the woman she loved, June Miller. In a comparison of the Diary and the fiction, we will observe how each of these three people were transformed into fictional characters, but transformed only in the sense that they were removed from real life and transplanted into a fictive realm.

Anais Nin uses art to plagiarize life. I do not use the word "plagiarize" in its literal sense of using the ideas or writings of another as one's own. Rather the word "plagiarize" should be conceived here in a metaphorical sense. Though it can be said that writers inevitably employ fragments of their own lives as fodder for fiction, Nin nevertheless relies too heavily on her own lived experience as the basis for her fiction. We will see that the father figure in "Winter of Artifice" is obviously her father, and that the characters of Jay and Sabina in the continuous novel, Cities of the Interior, are obviously patterned after Henry and June Miller. The origin of these characters may easily be traced back to the Diary, the record of Nin's actual life. Thus we can say that hers is an example of art plagiarizing life.

That Nin was a creative person cannot be disputed; she

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someone. And it happened that this one person had been associated with Mexico [the primary setting for Seduction of the Minotaur] (p. 31).

was a very productive writer of eleven works of fiction in addition to the continuous Diary. However, this thesis will demonstrate that Nin lacked a completely imaginative outlook in her fiction. Too often Nin merely copies the people she has known, and the fictional characters she created fail to transcend the personal experience to become universal. This may be one of the reasons why Nin's writing has never achieved widespread popularity.

Perhaps it is necessary as a final note to explain why I have chosen to focus the major part of this paper on an analysis which is predominately centred in Diary I. When there are now seven volumes of the Diary available to the public in addition to the early adolescent writing, the choice might appear paradoxical at first glance, particularly as there has never been as much of the Diary in print as there is in 1981. Allowing for a ten-year gap between the childhood and adult Diary, as well as a three-year gap between the end of Volume VII and the time of Nin's death, the public now possesses the Diary in full form. Why not undertake an analysis which would encompass the entire work?

The answer is simple. It is not enough to say that no other volume of the published Diary is as interesting as Volume I, though I believe this to be true. The fact of the matter is that the tone of the Diary is gradually altered when it becomes apparent that there is an audience for such personal writing. Ideally, of course, the whole <sup>point</sup> of keeping a diary is to permit oneself an outlet for all frustrations, a safe record for all good memories, and a history of one's own

existence. We associate diaries with privacy, a small book one may purchase with even a lock and key to safeguard it from the criticism of the objective world. When this is given to the world, it no longer is a diary in the strict sense of the word. Rather it becomes more like autobiography, for one is writing with a keen awareness of an audience who will read what is committed to paper. Diarist Gail Godwin says, "Too much 'publicity' is destructive to a diary, because the diarist begins, unconsciously perhaps, to leave out, to tone down, to pep up, to falsify experience, and the raison d'être of the undertaking becomes buried beneath posings."<sup>25</sup>

This "posing" is especially evident in Volume VII of the Diary. Of it, Katha Pollitt says,

I think this installment may make even devoted Ninians blush for their heroine. It's revealing in itself that Nin could have wanted to publish this scrapbook of flattery paid in and out, letters sent and received, impressionistic jottings on publicity tours of Europe and the Far East, lists of names. Worse, as her prose wears thin, so do her disguises. We see her arranging shamelessly for favourable reviews of her books, boasting of her power in the women's movement, surrounding herself with adoring hippies and graduate students, all the while seeing the world through a rainbow-tinted fog that lets her describe Arlene Francis, on whose talk show she appeared, as 'enormously intelligent and wise.'<sup>26</sup>

Or, as Marty Gervais says in his Windsor Star review:

Since Volume One, Nin's diaries become less and less interesting. Volume Seven probably should never have been released. In a sense it is simply a scrapbook of her success in the '60s. It fails to hold the interest of the

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<sup>25</sup>Gail Godwin, "A Diarist on Diaries," Antaeus XXI/XXII (Spring-Summer, 1976): 55.

<sup>26</sup>Katha Pollitt, "Apologia Ended," The New York Times Book Review, July 13, 1980, p. 7.

early diaries. Letters, adulation, newspaper reviews and fragmented sections of her lecture tours and what it's like to be famous have replaced the probing portraits and good writing of the early books. To be frank, it's not as vivid as the early Bohemian lifestyle, the string of affairs, the dabbling in psychology, the experiments with LSD, the struggle to hand-print her own books... No, <sup>27</sup>this is a book about success. The gossip is watered down.

To be sure, even Nin envisioned the possibility of an alteration in the tone of the manuscript version of her private journal if she were to publish an edited volume of her diary. In Volume III, we may read what Nin writes in the fall of 1953 regarding the problem of publishing the diary:

Aside from the human problem of those who have to be protected, there is also the problem that the diary is not finished. The condition of its continuation is secrecy. Exposure will kill the diary itself just as exposure of a spy will put an end to his activity. My identity cannot be exposed or the diary ends. The public eye and spotlight will kill it. (III, 135)

Public exposure did not "kill" the diary, but it certainly altered the essence of the diary, perhaps encouraging Nin to undertake the "posing" that Gail Godwin warned about.

The article which first inspired me to undertake this critical study of Nin's Diary I and the fiction was written by a feminist critic named Estelle C. Jelinek. At the conclusion of her article, "Anaïs Nin: A Critical Evaluation," Jelinek writes,

I believe Nin's involvement in the women's movement is insincere because she is not a feminist. She holds views that are contrary to those held by true feminists: the glorification of male heroes, the belief in the special nature of women that makes them superior to men, her repulsion of the ordinary, everyday struggles of oppressed peoples, her reliance on the individual solution,

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<sup>27</sup>Marty Gervais, "Darker side creeps into Anaïs Nin's diaries," The Windsor Star, 26 July 1980, p. E8.

and her own self-glorification. Women will be poets and free thinkers without the Anaïs Nins. I think it is time women began to look at Anaïs Nin with some objectivity. She may be an inspiration and model for the struggling creative artist, but she is not a feminist; in fact, some of her views are outright sexist. She sees little if any value to collective efforts and is blind to the economic realities of most of society. Nin is using the women's movement for her own ends--to sell her books. We must not weaken our cause by nearsightedness; hero-worshipping should be anathema to all serious radicals and feminists.<sup>28</sup>

Most important is the line: "I think it is time women began to look at Anaïs Nin with some objectivity." We do not need more critics to "analyze" Nin's work, only to tell us both she and it are wonderful. We do not need further tributes from someone like Diane Wakoski who writes, "Nin's work is as interesting as she is. And she is the closest thing we have to Venus living among us. A fascinating woman."<sup>29</sup> Nin died before I had a chance to meet her, so I cannot echo Wa-

<sup>28</sup>Estelle C. Jelinek, "Anaïs Nin: A Critical Evaluation," in Feminist Criticism: Essays on Theory, Poetry, and Prose, edited by Cheryl L. Brown and Karen Olson (Metuchen, New Jersey: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1978), pp. 322-323.

Nin's thoughts regarding women may be found in the following sources: (1) Anaïs Nin, "Notes on Feminism," The Massachusetts Review (Winter-Spring, 1972). Reprinted in A Casebook on Anaïs Nin, edited by Robert Zaller (New York: Meridian Books, 1974), pp. 27-32; (2) Anaïs Nin, "On Feminism and Creation," The Michigan Quarterly Review XIII, i (Winter, 1974): 4-13; and (3) "Anaïs Nin Talks About Being A Woman: An Interview," Vogue CLVIII, vii (October 15, 1971): 99, 103.

<sup>29</sup>Diane Wakoski, "A Tribute to Anaïs Nin" The American Poetry Review II, i (January-February 1973). Reprinted in A Casebook on Anaïs Nin, edited by Robert Zaller (New York: Meridian Books, 1974), p. 191.

There are many printed tributes to Anaïs Nin. In a survey on these, the three worst [too emotional and sentimental] are the following: (1) Lauretta Harris, "Reflections on Anaïs Nin," Women's Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal V (1978): 265-266; (2) Paula Jan Peper, "International College's Tribute to Anaïs Nin: The Impressions of Paula Jan Peper," Under the

koski's enthusiasm regarding how interesting a person Nin might have been. I do not know. However, I do know that the time has come to dispense with Nin's goddess image so that we might attempt a truly critical, truly objective evaluation of her ability as a writer.

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Sign of Pisces: Anaïs Nin and Her Circle IX, iii (Summer, 1978): 7-10; and (3) Fraser Sutherland, "Anaïs Nin in Montreal," Under the Sign of Pisces: Anaïs Nin and Her Circle IX, iii (Summer, 1978): 1-4.

The two best tributes [intelligently written with good insights into Nin's writing] are the following: (1) Sharon Spencer, "Anaïs Nin: A Heroine For Our Time," The Journal of the Otto Rank Association XII, i (Summer, 1977): 1-13; and (2) Jean Bradford, "The Self: A Mosaic--A Loving Perspective On The Diaries of Anaïs Nin," The Journal of the Otto Rank Association XII, i (Summer, 1977): 14-25.

A documentary film about Nin has been made by Robert Snyder; a book version of it is available as Anaïs Nin Observed: From A Film Portrait of a Woman as Artist, by Robert Snyder (Chicago: The Swallow Press, 1976). The book contains a fine collection of photographs with a commentary provided by Nin.

## CHAPTER II

### "COURTING AND FEARING SUFFERING FROM LOVE":

#### THE IMAGE OF THE FATHER IN THE DIARY

#### AND "WINTER OF ARTIFICE"<sup>1</sup>

Near the conclusion of Diary I comes the well-known account of Nin's delivery of a stillborn child,<sup>2</sup> and her regret at "the failure of my motherhood" (I, 346). Denied the actual role of becoming a mother, Nin acknowledges the option of another type of nurturing still available to her: "Lawrence's symbolic motherhood, bringing more hope into the world" (I, 346). As she writes,

Perhaps I was designed for other forms of creation. Nature connived to keep me a man's woman, and not a mother; not a mother to children but to men. Nature shaping my body for the love of man, not of child. This child which was a primitive connection to the earth, a prolongation of myself, now denied me as if to point up my destiny in other realms.

I love man as creator, lover, husband, friend, but man the father I do not trust. I do not believe in man as father. I do not trust man as father. When I wished this child to die, it was because I felt it would experience the same lack. (I, 346)

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<sup>1</sup>Winter of Artifice is the title given to a collection of three novelettes which Nin published early in her writing career. One of the novelettes is itself entitled "Winter of Artifice." To avoid possible confusion, the title of the novelette will be distinguished by quotation marks ("Winter of Artifice"), and the title of the collection will be underlined (Winter of Artifice).

<sup>2</sup>For a perceptive consideration of Diary I and in particular the way Nin comes to integrate the masculine qualities of Henry Miller and the feminine qualities of June Miller with-

Why does Nin claim to love man in his role as creator, lover, husband, and friend, yet remain so disenchanting, ever fearful of man as father? What led to this lack of trust and belief in man as father?<sup>3</sup>

One of the most important characters in the Diary, next to Nin herself, is the man who "gave [her] the idea that all men were selfish, incapable of love, unfaithful" (I, 175). The man was her father, Joaquin Nin, whom Anaïs loved with a devotion that bordered on the abnormal in its obsessive intensity. Despite her worship of him, he was a severe parent: "To his children, at home, he showed an over-critical, ever-dissatisfied self. Displeased, discontented. No sign of feeling, no demonstration of tenderness" (I, 209). This firm disciplinarian dominated his young daughter entirely, even to the point where it appeared as though she possessed no will of her own. As Nin writes, "My father organizes life, interprets it, controls it. His passion for criticism and perfection paralyzed me" (I, 252). His passion for perfection spurred him on to become a concert pianist of considerable renown; his music and his photography were his chief interests. Nin used to sit as a model for her father: "He liked to take photos of me while I bathed. He always wanted me naked. All his admiration came by way of the

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in herself to give birth to herself as an artist, see Tristine Rainer, "Anaïs Nin's Diary I: The Birth of the Young Woman as an Artist," A Casebook on Anaïs Nin, edited by Robert Zaller (New York: Meridian Books, 1974), pp. 161-168. Rainer believes that Nin's "artistic birth" is precipitated by the birth of her stillborn child.

<sup>3</sup>This paper neglects the role of Nin's mother; for an



camera;" in retrospect, Nin says, "It was the only time we spent together" (I, 87).<sup>4</sup>

Their time together came to an end when Joaquin Nin ran off with his young mistress and Rosa Nin, Anaïs's mother, took her children with her to America where they would grow up in a different culture. Nin writes,

I did not know that this trip to America was, deep down, my mother's effort to estrange us from my father, not only by distance, but by immersing us in a contrasting culture, the opposite of the Latin, and teaching us a language that he did not know. It was a gesture made against all that he represented. (I, 243)

In the Introduction to Diary I, Gunther Stuhlmann relates the story of the Diary's inception and the influential role that Joaquin Nin unwittingly played:

The diary had its inception on the boat that brought Anaïs Nin, her mother and two brothers, from Spain to America. At the age of eleven Miss Nin already was possessed by what she later called 'an immediate awareness,' both 'terrible and painful.' Her father, the idol of her early years, had deserted the family, had turned his attention to another, a very young woman. At first, she tried to win back her father: 'The diary began as a diary of a journey, to record everything for my father. It was really a letter, so he could follow us into a strange land, know about us.' But the 'letter' was never sent (her mother told her it would get lost), and the diary became also 'an island, in which I could find refuge in an alien land, write French, think my thoughts, hold on to my soul, to myself.' (I, viii)

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absorbing "psychological analysis of the presence of the world mother and her personal mother in Anaïs Nin's psyche and literary works," see Stephanie A. Demetrakopoulos, "Anaïs Nin and the Feminine Quest for Consciousness: The Quelling of the Devouring Mother and the Ascension of the Sophia," in Women, Literature, Criticism: Bucknell Review, edited by Harry R. Garvin (Lewisburg, Pennsylvania: Bucknell University Press, 1978), pp. 119-136.

<sup>4</sup> Obviously Nin is self-conscious about her relationship with her father; we may take the Freudian element in this situation for granted.

Or, as Nin says,

When I came to America I couldn't speak the language, and I had no friends. So the diary became the friend and the father confessor. It was also the substitute for the absent father. And it was in this way that I learned the vital quality of what seemed to be a monologue, an interior monologue. For it wasn't only that. It was the way I was going to rebuild the bridge that was broken by the separation of my parents and by the uprooting to a foreign country. So the writing began to have a living, vital meaning which had nothing to do with literature. The diary became not only a companion, so that I wouldn't be lost in a foreign country with a language I couldn't speak, but also a source of contact with myself. It was a place where I could tell the truth and where I felt that nobody would look.<sup>5</sup>

It is intriguing that Nin should first begin her diary as a love letter to the father who abandoned her; later her fiction would come to reflect and further explore this theme.

However, before she was able to use her fiction as a form of therapy, Nin spent several months undergoing analysis under the guidance of Dr. René Allendy;<sup>6</sup> many of the conversations between the doctor and the patient on several different occasions are reproduced in almost painstaking detail in the

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<sup>5</sup>Hinz, ed., A Woman Speaks, p. 157.

<sup>6</sup>Dr. René Felix Allendy, the French psychoanalyst born in 1889, was the founder of the Société Française de Psychoanalyse and a lecturer at the Sorbonne. He wrote his thesis on "Les Theories Alchimique dans l'Histoire de la Médecine," in 1912. Among his major works are La Psychoanalyse (Paris: Denoel & Steele, 1931); Capitalisme et Sexualité (Paris: Denoel & Steele, 1932). His Aristote, ou le complexe de trahison, published after his death in 1942, was published in English as The Treason Complex (New York: Social Science Pub. Co., 1949). During the 1920's and 1930's, he was closely associated with the Surrealist movement, particularly with Antonin Artaud, who was a friend of Anaïs Nin, and Nin worked for Dr. Allendy in 1933. ["Some Biographical Notes," from Henry Miller: Letters to Anaïs Nin, edited with an introduction by Gunther Stuhlmann (New York: Capricorn Books, 1976), p. 341.]

Diary account. In her attempt to come to terms with her father's abandonment of the family, particularly of herself, and her subsequent feeling of suspicion and mistrust towards all men in general, Nin finds she must ask herself an essential question: "Can a child's confidence, once shaken and destroyed, have such repercussions on a whole life? Why should my father's insufficient love remain indelible; why was it not effaced by all the loves I received since he left me?" (I, 76). Dr. Allendy's observation that "you seem to lack confidence" (I, 76), elicits from Nin a brief summary of her feelings about her father:

My father did not want a girl. My father was over-critical. He was never satisfied, never pleased. I never remember a compliment or a caress from him. At home, only scenes, quarrels, beatings. And his hard blue eyes on us, looking for the flaws. When I was ill with typhoid fever, almost dying, all he could say was: 'Now you are ugly, how ugly you are.' He was always on tour, pampered by women. My mother made scenes of jealousy. When I was nine years old and almost died of an appendicitis not diagnosed early enough, and we arrived at Arcachon, where he was vacationing, he made it plain he did not want us. What he meant for my mother I also took for myself. Yet I had a hysterical sorrow when he finally abandoned us. I always feared his hardness and his criticalness. I could not bring myself to see him again. (I, 76)

Not only did her father rob her of any sense of self-confidence, he was the reason for Nin's loss of faith: "I gave up my faith in God because He did not accomplish a miracle and bring my father back to me on my thirteenth birthday. That was my prayer and it was never answered" (I, 90). In the absence of the traditional God, Nin elevates her own father to that exalted position: "When I took communion at Mass, I imagined it was not Christ who visited me in this heart shaped

like a room, but my father" (I, 90). Yet this father abandoned her, forced her to fend for herself in the world. So, in order to strike even a tentative balance in her own world, Nin enters Henry Miller's world of "poverty, Bohemianism, and living by expediciencies," the opposite of Joaquin Nin's world of "luxury, society life, aesthetics, security, and aristocratic friendships" (I, 98).

Ironically, at the point when it appears as though Nin has finally reconciled within herself her feelings for Joaquin Nin, he steps back into her life: "My father comes when I have gone beyond him; he is given to me when I no longer need him, when I am free of him" (I, 203). Despite her attempt to become everything that her father was not, despite the words she wrote in her journal: "I had always lived not to be my father" (I, 209), Nin finds it impossible to pretend that there is no link joining the father and the daughter:

As a Spanish man, demanding of women only blind devotion, submission, warmth, love, protection, he is amazed to find in a woman a spirit like his own, adventurous, rebellious, explorative, unconventional. Amazed, and at first delighted, for every narcissist dreams of a twin. No Dorian Gray in a painting, but a father like myself, a daughter like myself. The double who will answer questions. Do you feel this way, or that way? You too? Well, we are not so strange, or so lonely. There are two of us. The fragments of our life which do not fit into a desired image, we discard. But I cull them in my diary, and I cannot forget them. My father forgets them. (I, 208)

Perhaps the existence of similarities between the father and the daughter is unavoidable; nevertheless, Anaïs Nin develops into a personality quite distinct from her father: "When he

left, I felt as if I had seen the Anais I never wanted to be" (I, 209).

Still it is this yearning of the daughter for the father who has abandoned her when she perhaps needed him more than she would ever again need him, it is this yearning which becomes a theme in "Winter of Artifice." Although the image of the father does not occur solely in this story, no other piece of Nin's writing deals so completely with the father image, and therefore we will use "Winter of Artifice" as the focus for our study of fathers and daughters, or, more specifically, Nin's fictionalized rendering of her relationship with her father. He becomes "Don Juan, who possessed more than a thousand women, who [gave] up his life for his daughter. His daughter gave up all her friends for her father" (I, 308). To this excerpt from the Diary, Nin adds, "See 'Winter of Artifice' for development of theme" (I, 308).

In "Winter of Artifice," we find the following brief introductory paragraph: "She is waiting for him. She was waiting for him for twenty years. He is coming today."<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>See Paul Grimley Kuntz, "Art As Public Dream: The Practice and Theory of Anaïs Nin" in A Casebook on Anaïs Nin, edited by Robert Zaller (New York: Meridian Books, 1974), pp. 74-99. Of particular interest is the third part of the essay, entitled "The Diary Report and 'Winter of Artifice.'" In it, Kuntz, too, draws parallels between the record of Joaquin Nin in Diary I and the fictionalized father in "Winter of Artifice." However, Kuntz does not offer any demonstration that Nin used art to plagiarize life, as I intend to do.

<sup>8</sup>Anaïs Nin, Winter of Artifice: Three Novelettes (Chicago: The Swallow Press, 1948), p. 55. All further references to this text will be cited in the course of the essay. The title will be abbreviated to WA, and a page reference will follow.

The identity of the man and woman is ambiguous; they could be anyone. The second paragraph provides an essential clue in the mention of "the ship which carried her away from him after he had abandoned her" (WA, 55). They could be husband and wife, or lovers. As Evelyn J. Hinz says, "The technique is very subtle, for the narrator's intimate tone and the fact that Djuna has been waiting for twenty years for 'him' lead the reader to anticipate a reunion of lovers."<sup>9</sup> Yet they could even be father and daughter. Any reader familiar with Diary I or simply the story of its inception notices the word "abandoned", and makes a connection between the fictional and the autobiographical. We cannot help but suspect that the twosome are father and daughter, and that the daughter is patterned after Nin. After all, the female character in this novelette is awaiting the arrival of a man whom we assume is her father, the same way Nin kept waiting for her own father to return to her.

Our assumption is proven correct when Nin fills in the details prior to the departure by sea of the daughter after the abandonment by the father. She writes:

How well she remembers their home near the sea, the villa which was in ruins. She was nine years old. She arrived there with her mother and two brothers. Her father was standing behind a window, watching. His face was pale, he did not seem glad to see them. She felt that he did not want them, that he did not want her. (WA, 55)  
[Emphasis mine.]

Finally, the man is identified as the father of the woman. It is obvious that the character of the father has been cut

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<sup>9</sup>Evelyn J. Hinz, The Mirror And The Garden: Realism and Reality In The Writings of Anaïs Nin (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1971), p. 43.

from the pattern provided by Nin's recollections of what life with Joaquin Nin was like; thanks to the temperament of the head of this household, the house is filled with "great explosions of anger, hatred, revolt. War" (WA, 55). Indeed, the eyes of the father in "Winter of Artifice" are "always cold, critical, unbelieving" (WA, 57). The actual event of Nin nearly dying from an attack of appendicitis finds its way into the fiction here:

Another time he was taken down with an attack of appendicitis. Her mother was tending him, fussing over him, running about anxiously. He lay there very pale in the big bed. She came from the street where she had been playing and told her mother that she was in pain. Immediately her father said: Don't pay any attention to her, she is just acting. She is just imitating me. But she did have an attack of appendicitis. She had to be taken to the hospital and operated on. Her father, on the other hand, had recovered. He was in bed only three days. (WA, 58)

Not only do the fictional father and Joaquin Nin share a passion for emotional outbursts, they also share a passion for music, as witnessed in the profession of the father in the story. He, too, is a musician, a pianist, actually, who abandons his daughter.

In her own fictional story, Nin the daughter may manipulate events and details to suit herself, and she chooses to do so in "Winter of Artifice" when she alters the father's reason for leaving the family. Here, in her story, Nin writes, "There was a passage in the diary wherein she wrote that she would like to relive her life in Spain. At that early age she was bemoaning the irreversibility of life" (WA, 64). Life is indeed irreversible, but in fiction one may

not only relive the past, one may shape or alter the past to suit one's whims. Thus, Joaquin Nin's abandonment of his little daughter and family to live instead with his mistress is not included in the story. Instead we read,

Since he often left them to go on concert tours they were so used to her father's departures that they barely ceased playing to embrace him. She remembered now the day he was leaving to go on tour. He was standing at the door, elegant, aristocratic. He looked the same as always. Suddenly, moved by an acute premonition, she threw herself on him and clung to him passionately. 'Don't go, Father! Don't leave me!' she begged. She wept so violently that her father was startled. (WA, 60)

Perhaps it is less painful to be abandoned for the sake of art rather than for a young and beautiful mistress. In a story that is autobiographical, and so obviously described in painstaking detail from real life, it is interesting that Nin inserts an alteration such as this. Perhaps the actual abandonment must remain as an irreversible detail, and only the reason motivating the departure can be altered.

After the father has abandoned his wife, his two sons, and his daughter, the family takes a ship from Barcelona to the New York harbour. Like her real-life predecessor, the girl begins a diary once they have left Spain:

It was a monologue, or dialogue, dedicated to him, inspired by the superabundance of thoughts and feelings caused by the pain of leaving him. With the sea between them she felt that at least she might be able to reveal to him with absolute sincerity the great love she bore him, as well as her sadness and her yearning.

They arrived in New York with huge wicker baskets, a cage full of birds, a violin case and no money. She carried her diary in a basket. She was timid, withdrawn. (WA, 61)

The description of the "timid" and "withdrawn" girl could be a self-portrait; indeed, in Linotte there is a reproduction



of a photograph worth mentioning.<sup>10</sup> Taken at Coney Island, the photograph shows Mrs. Nin, one of her sons, Joaquinito, and Anaïs, as well as a family friend and her daughter. Of particular interest is the shy, even distracted, far-off look in Anaïs's eyes, and the small wicker basket held with both hands and supported on her lap, the basket which Anaïs used to carry her diary in. What Nin writes about the little girl and her diary she could just as easily write about herself:

And so, little by little, she shut herself up within the walls of her diary. She held long conversations with herself, through the diary. She talked to her diary, addressed it by name, as if it were a living person, her other self perhaps. Looking out the window which gave on their ugly back yard she imagined that she was looking at parks, castles, golden grilles, and exotic flowers. Within the covers of the diary she created another world wherein she told the truth, in contrast to the multiple lies which she span when she was conversing with others, as for instance telling her playmates that she had travelled all around the world, describing to them the places which she had read about in her father's library.

The yearning for her father became a long, continuous plaint. Every page contained long pleas to him, invocations to God to reunite them. Hours and hours of suffocating moods, of dreams and reveries, of feverish restlessness, or morbid, somber memories and longings. She could not bear to listen to music, especially the arias her mother sang: 'Ever since the day,' 'Some day he'll come,' etc. Her mother seemed to choose only the songs which reminded her of him. (WA, 62)

In light of the fact that the daughter "created another world," Hinz notes, "...thus the reader is forewarned that the awaited personage has, in Djuna's mind, been exaggerated

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<sup>10</sup>The photograph may be found in a 2"x3" version in Linotte: The Early Diary of Anaïs Nin, 1914-1920 (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1978), p. 76. A larger 3"x4" version may also be found in A Photographic Supplement To The Diary of Anaïs Nin (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1974), p. 2. Note the caption beneath the photograph: "At this time the author carried her diary in the little straw basket wherever she went."

out of all proportion, and that for her he is no longer merely a man but the hero of her individual myth."<sup>11</sup>

Such yearning for the father is evidenced in Linotte: there are numerous instances where the child Anaïs longs for the return of her father. In her early diaries she records the major events of the day, but the priority lies in her descriptions of how she misses her father and longs to be reunited with him. On October 16, 1914, she records a dream:

One day at my window, where I had so often wept and where so many bitter tears had fallen, I saw the one I love, the one I adore, suddenly appear. Full of love, I rushed into the arms that were stretched out toward me. Oh, what joy! Oh, what happiness! I can't believe it! That day I knew the happiness of my father's kiss!<sup>12</sup>

The father's absence leaves the daughter with a desperate hope that he will return on Christmas Day.<sup>13</sup> Although she realizes that his geographical distance from her makes such a wish impossible to grant, she prays to God for a miracle. And still her father does not come.

In the mind's eye of Anaïs Nin, Joaquin Nin the father becomes a substitute for God the Father after her loss of faith;<sup>14</sup> in "Winter of Artifice," the daughter raises the image of her father to that exalted position:

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<sup>11</sup>Hinz, The Mirror And The Garden, p. 43.

<sup>12</sup>Anaïs Nin, Linotte, p. 23.

<sup>13</sup>On September 27, 1914, approximately two months after the Nin family has left Barcelona, Anaïs writes in her journal: "This morning I prayed with all my soul and all my fervour to the Virgin Mary and if she heard me, my dearest Papa will be here with me for Christmas. That is my prayer, my dream, my dearest wish." [Anaïs Nin, Linotte, p. 22.]

<sup>14</sup>For a further exploration of this theme, see Paul Grim-

Her true God was her father. At communion it was her father she received, and not God. She closed her eyes and swallowed the white bread with blissful tremors. She embraced her father in holy communion. Her exaltation fused into a semblance of holiness. She aspired to saintliness in order to conceal the secret love which she guarded so jealously in her diary. The voluptuous tears at night when she prayed to God, the joy without name when she stood in his presence, the inexplicable bliss at communion, because then she talked with her father and she kissed him. (WA, 65)

Again art imitates life: after the beloved father abandons his daughter and is separated from her for many years, time comes for the reunion between the two of them: "He is coming. She hears his steps" (WA, 67).

The arrival of Nin's father in the Diary is not vastly different from the passage in "Winter of Artifice" from which it was obviously derived. First, the Diary excerpt:

My father came.

I expected the man of the photographs, a more transparent face. A face less furrowed, less carved, less masklike, and at the same time I liked the new face, the depth of the lines, the firmness of the jaw, the femininity and charm of the smile, all the more startling in contrast to the tanned, almost parchment-toned skin. A smile with a forceful dimple which was not a dimple but a scar from sliding down a stairway banister and piercing his cheek with an ornament when he was a child. (I, 206)

In the story, the passage appears thus:

She expected the man of the photographs, the young man of the photographs. She had not tried to imagine what the years had done to his face.

It was not any older, there were no wrinkles on it, but there was a mask over it. His face wore a mask. The skin did not match the skin of his wrists. It seemed made of earth and papier-mâché, not pure skin. There must have been a little space between it and the real face, a little partition through which the breeze could sing, and behind this mask another smile, another face,

and skin like that of his wrists, white and vulnerable.  
(WA, 67-68)

Unexpectedly, he broke when he smiled, the hardness broke and the softness which came was so feminine, so exposed, giving and seducing with the beauty of the teeth, exposing a dimple which he said was not a dimple at all, but a scar from the time he had slid down the banister.  
(WA, 70)

For the sake of the fictional account, the father is said to be wearing a mask, although the face of Joaquin Nin is, by Nin's admission, "less masklike." Both the Diary and "Winter of Artifice" mention the father's immediate apology for the past and his recent winter sojourn in the south (I, 208; WA, 68-69); however, only in the Diary does Nin admit: "There must be something else behind this which he is covering up. He probably went to meet a mistress" (I, 208). Indeed, both versions even contain the joke that the daughter should join the father at the Riviera where everyone will think she is his mistress as he proudly shows her off (I, 211; WA, 69).

The image of the crystal bowl is found in the novelette as well as the Diary account. In the Diary, the description is brief: "I pulled away my hand brusquely; hit the glass bowl with the crystal fish and stones, and it broke, and the water ran down the mantelpiece to the floor" (I, 211). In the story we read an expanded version of the incident:

She was standing against the mantelpiece. He was looking at her hands, admiring them. She leaned backwards, pushing the crystal bowl against the wall. It cracked and the water gushed forth as from a fountain, splashing all over the floor. The glass ship could no longer sail away --it was lying on its side, on the rock-crystal stones.

They stood looking at the broken bowl and at the water forming a pool on the floor.

'Perhaps I've arrived at my port at last,' she said.  
'Perhaps I've come to the end of my wanderings. I have found you.' (WA, 69)

Here Sharon Spencer comments on the breaking of the crystal bowl which contains the glass ship:

In reality, it is another journey that awaits her. The breaking of the bowl frees the water as the daughter's gradual reappraisal of her father frees her from her childish fantasy of creating a life with him; she is now ready to journey into her own future as a woman. In other books there are descriptions of stranded ships: the ship on land; the ship exiled to a cemetery for barges; the ship that leaks.<sup>15</sup> All suggest some interference with the motion of life.

Bettina Knapp sees additional meaning in the image of the glass bowl which contains not only a glass boat but glass fish as well:

Nin was playing with an optical illusion: goldfish in water, and particularly when made of glass, reflect and refract light, and thus twist the objects out of shape. The curved bowl further distorts the original image of the fish within. Forms, then, although distinct, become misshapen; although clear, become blurred.

Such are Djuna's sensations when seeing her father after many years of absence. The fishbowl contains its objects: they are incarcerated, yet protected from breakage or other malevolent forces; that the fish are of glass indicates their hardness and brittleness as well as their immobility. Although glass is transparent, it acts as a separation: the fine wall existing between father and daughter, between outer and inner worlds. Djuna at times experiences her father as a glass object--an unbending and brittle entity. For this reason, perhaps, she can see through him and perceive him in a variety of poses, circumstances, moods, and reflections.<sup>16</sup>

What we see is that Nin not only transplants details about her father from the Diary and into the fiction, she even latches onto an image and uses it where suitable.

<sup>15</sup>Sharon Spencer, Collage of Dreams: The Writings of Anaïs Nin (Chicago: The Swallow Press, Inc., 1977), p. 57.

<sup>16</sup>Bettina Knapp, Anaïs Nin (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Company, 1978), p. 78.

In "Winter of Artifice," Nin still perpetuates the image of her father as a Don Juan character. Again a correlation between the Diary and the fiction may be seen in reference to the father's tale of a liaison with a governess. First, the Diary:

And then he talked about his love affairs, and they did not seem as casual, as indifferent as legend had described them. Not the Don Juan who conquers, and the next day is gone. He mixed his pleasures with creativity; he was interested in the creation of human beings. He tells me the story of the humble and rather homely little governess no one paid attention to. 'Without me she would never have known love. I used to cover her homely little face to make love to her. It transformed her. She became almost beautiful.' (I, 236)

Second, the passage from "Winter of Artifice":

Her father was telling her the story of the homely little governess he had made love to because otherwise she would never have known what love was. He took her out in his beautiful car and made her lie on the heather just as the sun was going down so he would not have to see too much of her face. He enjoyed her happiness at having an adventure, the only one she would ever have. When she came to his room in the hotel he covered the lamp with a handkerchief, and again he enjoyed her happiness, and taught her how to do her hair, how to rouge her lips and powder her face. The adventure made her almost beautiful. (WA, 73)

Nin may alter some of the details of the actual story and then add details of her own, but it is still clear that this story was borrowed from her father's actual experiences.

Nevertheless, both "Winter of Artifice" and the Diary acknowledge the discrepancy between the memory of the father and the figure now standing before her. How can the cruel man she remembered be the same man who picks up an insect from the road to place it on a leaf, away from the crossing automobiles which would squash it? In her Diary, Nin asks, "Why did he seem so severe to me as a child?" (I, 208). In

her story, she writes:

As she watched him playing with the concierge's dog she wondered why she could not remember him ever sitting down to play with them; she wondered whether this conception she had of her father's cruelty was not entirely imaginary. She could not piece together his gentleness with animals and his hardness towards his children. He lived in his world like a scientist occupied with the phenomena of nature. The ways of insects aroused his curiosity; he liked to experiment, but the phenomena which the lives of his children offered, their secrets, their perplexities, had no interest for him, or rather, they disturbed him.

It was really a myopia of the soul. (WA, 76-77)

The daughter dreads the arrival of her father; yet once they meet, she is surprised by her accepting attitude towards him, even her acknowledgement of their similarities. As her father says, "You are my daughter. We think the same. We laugh at the same things. You owe me nothing. You have created yourself alone, but I gave you the seed" (WA, 71; see also I, 235). Or, as the daughter responds, "...every answer she gave was the echo in his own soul. Echoes. Echoes. Echoes. Echoes. Blood echoes. Yes, yes, to everything." And "that is what she hoped. The same: father and daughter. Unison. The same rhythm" (WA, 72). Here Hinz elaborates: "Their relationship, obviously, is not as incestuous as it is narcissistic. Each loves the self in the other."<sup>17</sup> And yet, if there is such admiration for her on his part, why did he stay away for so long? The daughter says, "In all the fairy tales where the child is taken away she either returns when she is twenty, or the father returns to

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<sup>17</sup>Hinz, The Mirror And The Garden, p. 43.

the daughter when she is twenty." To this, her father says, "He waits till she gets beyond the stage of having to have her nose blown. He waits for the interesting age (WA, 79).

However, the "interesting" age in a young woman brings with it an interest in men other than her father, and this irks his jealous nature. As he reads her diary,

he observed that after two years of obsessional yearning for him she had finally exhausted her suffering and obtained serenity: After serenity she had fallen in love with an Irish boy and then with a violinist. He was offended that she had not died completely, that she had not spent the rest of her life yearning for him. He did not understand that she had continued to love him better by living than by dying for him. She had loved him in life, lived for him and created for him. She had written the diary for him. (WA, 79)

The long paragraph ends, "She had loved him in life creatively by writing about him" (WA, 79); the writing Nin created about her father resides in the Diary and the fiction. To allay her father's jealous fears and to maintain his illusion of perfect fidelity, the daughter reassures her father that her past life without him lacked importance: "The result was that nothing appeared in its true light and that she deformed her true self" (WA, 80).

Even though she thinks it preposterous, he likes to think of his daughter as an Amazon: "Why? Because an Amazon did not need a father. Nor a lover, nor a husband. An Amazon was a law and a world all to herself" (WA, 81). The daughter comprehends the full portent of this illusion: "He was abdicating his father role" (WA, 81). As Hinz says, "She realizes that her father always was and always will be a child. At the same time she recognizes her own childish



refusal to recognize this fact even when confronted with evidence."<sup>18</sup> Here Sharon Spencer adds, "As long as the daughter collaborates in this perception of herself, she permits her father to continue to refuse all responsibility for her needs and desires."<sup>19</sup> The father has returned from years of abandoning his daughter, only to abandon her again, in effect, so that she will nurture and protect him, not vice versa. It is no longer a daughter that the father wants, nor even a mother, but a wife or a mistress. As he says, "Now I see that all these women I pursued are all in you, and you are my daughter, and I can't marry you! You are the synthesis of all the women I loved" (WA, 84). In the Diary, Joaquin Nin says, "You are the synthesis of all the women I have loved. What a pity that you are my daughter!" (I, 237).

In a sense of doing proper justice to Anaís Nin, we must note that there comes at this point an orchestral image to convey the harmony which the daughter and father wish to share with one another, a harmony where the daughter becomes "the mystical bride of her father" (WA, 89). This image does not appear in the Diary account, so we must indeed give Nin credit where it is rightfully due: there are some original touches which have no basis in her lived experience. Such a feature is the orchestral image, the meaning of which Nin explains:

...I wanted to express the daughter's desire to be very close to her father, as close and as intimate as a

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 44.

<sup>19</sup>Spencer, Collage of Dreams, p. 16.

daughter and father might be without sexual union. Emotional harmony and intimacy which are not literal incest. There was no way to express such a feeling but by way of the orchestra image. This was at first suggested by the fact that he was a musician. She wants to live in harmony with her father. She wants to fuse their resemblances into a lasting, deep bond. She seeks harmonizations. A separation of ten years has made them strangers, and they must reconstruct the exact nature of the relationship. Such a close scrutiny of a relationship between fathers and daughters risks being misunderstood, as so many unconscious drives are, except by the analyst. Unconsciously, certainly, the daughter seeks a form of union while respecting taboos. I used the orchestra to follow all the nuances of this risky venture.<sup>20</sup>

The power of the image becomes clear in an excerpt from the long orchestral passage in "Winter of Artifice":

Inside both their heads, as they sat there, there was a concert going on. Two boxes filled with the resonance of an orchestra. A hundred instruments playing all at once. Two long spools of flute threads interweaving between his past and hers, the strings inside their bodies, the nerves never still.... Music spilling out from the throat in place of tears, music spilling from the throat in place of words, music falling from his fingertips in place of caresses, music exchanged between them instead of love.... (WA, 84, 87)

It is unfortunate that this four-page orchestral passage contains the only break from Nin's effort to transform autobiography into fiction; she returns to the story of her father and herself after this brief musical interlude.

The daughter is a dancer; the father does not believe that his daughter should be making such a show of herself. Once, on the stage, the daughter performs flawlessly until she spots a man whom she thinks is her father and she momentarily loses her concentration. Years later she questions her father about his presence at her performance. "He answered that not

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<sup>20</sup> Anais Nin, The Novel of the Future (New York: MacMillan Publishing Co., 1976), p. 30.

only was he not there but that if he had the power he would have prevented her from dancing because he did not want his daughter on the stage" (WA, 98). Nin herself was a dancer for a time; in the Diary, she records a confrontation with her father over her dancing. He says, "Have you forgotten who you are? You are my daughter, you have forgotten your class, your name, your true stature in life" (I, 264). Thus we may again see that this small reference to the father's displeasure in the dancing of his daughter has its basis in Nin's actual experience.

Yet, despite his disapproval, despite their different opinions about dancing, the daughter finds her father is still in many ways like herself: "There was a likeness and no understanding, likeness and no nearness" (WA, 91). Out on a drive one day, the father takes off his shoe to relieve his sore foot, and "as he pulled off his sock she saw the foot of a woman" (WA, 91). The daughter imagines it to be her own foot which her father has stolen from her. Naturally this leads to great confusion on her part and a feeling that "She is not alone in the world. She had a double" (WA, 91). This recalls the Diary passage where Nin writes, "...every narcissist dreams of a twin" (I, 208). In the fiction, she notes,

...her father is her double, her shadow, and she does not know which one is real. One of them must die so that the other may find the boundaries of himself. To leap out freely beyond the self, love must flow out and beyond this wall of confused identities. Now she is all confused in her boundaries. She doesn't know where her father begins, where she begins, where it is he ends, what is the difference between them. (WA, 92)

Back with her father in Paris, the daughter experiences

what she calls the "winter of artifice":

There was no change in his love, but the mask was back again as soon as he returned to Paris. The whole pattern of his artificial life began again. He had stopped talking as he talked down south. He was conversing. It was the beginning of his salon life. There were always people around with whom he kept up a tone of lightness and humour. In the evenings she had to appear in his salon and talk with the tip of her tongue about everything that was far from her thoughts.

This was the winter of artifice. (WA, 95)

Here Oliver Evans says, "In her heart she realizes that she is making a mistake, and that the romance is doomed, but she cannot as yet bring herself to leave. The distance between them is widening, however, to the point where she can analyze the situation quite objectively."<sup>21</sup>

To emotionally extricate herself from her father and to be physically free of his presence, the daughter realizes now how she "had run away to places where he never went" (WA, 102). Everything her father would have done and everything her father would have liked becomes repulsive to her; this is the pattern whereby she has lived her life. And now the father who stands before her fabricates stories, "falsifying all that happened to him" because he, too, will not release "his illusion of an exclusive love" (WA, 105) between him and his daughter. The explanation of one of his amorous adventures appears in both the Diary and this story. In the original source it is as follows:

And then he added, 'She slashed her face in order to justify her tardiness to her husband, saying she had been in an automobile accident.'

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<sup>21</sup> Oliver Evans, Anaïs Nin (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1968), p. 50.

This part of the story seemed highly improbable to me, as no woman in love will endanger her beauty. And here was the countess, with a face fair and flawless, where no knife had ever made the slightest scratch. (I, 310)

In "Winter of Artifice," it appears thus:

He repeated a story which he had told her, before, of how the countess had slashed her face in order to justify her tardiness to her husband. This story had always seemed highly improbable to her, because a woman in love is not likely to endanger her beauty. Any explanation would have been simpler than this far-fetched tale of an automobile accident. (WA, 104)

An even more blatant example of art plagiarizing life may be found in a comparison of page 313 of the Diary with pages 105-106 of "Winter of Artifice." It becomes apparent that the material is merely "lifted" from one source and placed into the fiction.

The father clings to the illusion of himself as a dashing, albeit aging, Don Juan, and "the illusion of a daughter who had never loved any one but him" (WA, 107). He refuses to acknowledge that he is well past the age of love affairs, now that his body is plagued by lumbago, or that his daughter has loved others. As the narrator of the story observes, "He had chosen to live on the surface, and she to descend deeper and deeper. His fundamental desire was to escape pain, hers to face all of life" (WA, 107). Her father appears as a man obsessed by the fear of "need, war and change" (WA, 110), a man who has supplies of stationery and medicine to last years, a man who washes his hands continuously. His daughter mentions "his soul unwashed, unwashable, yearning to be free of the microbe of conscience" even though "he believes he is merely washing the stain of microbes from his hands" (WA, 112). In

her ability to see reality, the daughter is gifted with clear sight. Of her father she can now say:

You held the conductor's baton, but no music could come from the orchestra because of your severity. As soon as you left my heart beat in great disorder. Everything melted into music, and I could dance through the streets singing, without an orchestra leader. I could dance and sing. (WA, 100)

Her father, however, continues to stumble in the blindness of his illusions.

Near the conclusion of "Winter of Artifice," the daughter realizes that her father has blurred his image of his child with his former wife so that the daughter becomes the mother, in effect. She not only fulfills the role for her father, she finally understands the situation from her mother's point of view. In The Novel of the Future, Nin explains this scene herself:

...the daughter realizes that the dialogue taking place with her father is not truly between herself and her father but between her father and her mother. He has made her an understudy for the mother. He is justifying himself to the figure of the mother which for a moment has been superimposed over the daughter. These realities lie beyond and above reality.<sup>22</sup>

The scene comes in a remarkable section of two pages which have been transplanted straight from the Diary to the fiction with barely a word altered. First, the Diary:

But suddenly I stopped. I knew my father was not seeing me any more, but always that judge, that past which made him so uneasy. I felt as if I were not myself any more, but my mother, with a body tired with giving and serving, rebelling at his selfishness and irresponsibility. I felt my mother's anger and despair. For the first time, my own image of my father fell to the floor. I saw my mother's image. I saw the child in him who de-

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<sup>22</sup>Nin, The Novel of the Future, p. 77.

manded all love and did not know how to love in return. I saw the child incapable of an act of protectiveness, or self-denial. I saw the child hiding behind her courage, the same child now hiding behind Maruca's protection. I was my mother telling him that, as a human being and as a father, as a husband, he was a failure. And perhaps she had told him, too, that as a musician he had not given enough to justify his limitations as a human being. All his life he had played with people, with love, played at love, played at being a concert pianist, playing at composing, playing; because to no one or to nothing could he give his entire soul.

The passage in "Winter of Artifice is astoundingly similar:

But suddenly she stopped. She knew her father was not seeing her any more, but always that judge, that past which made him so uneasy. She felt as if she were not herself any more, but her mother, her mother with a body tired with giving and serving, rebelling at his selfishness and irresponsibility. She felt her mother's anger and despair. For the first time her own image fell on the floor. She saw her mother's image. She saw the child in him who demanded all love and did not know how to love. She saw the child incapable of an act of hiding now under Laura's protection. She was her mother telling him again that as a human being, he was a failure. And perhaps she had told him too that as a musician he had not given enough to justify his limitations as a human being. All his life he had been playing with people, with love, playing at love, playing at being a pianist, playing at composing. Playing because to no one or nothing could he give his whole soul. (WA, 115)

By now it is abundantly clear that the fictional story is indeed patterned after Nin's lived experience; Nin admits as much herself in this Diary excerpt from the time of writing "Winter of Artifice": "I wrote the scene straight into the novel, not the diary: 'I wanted the truth between us, Father'" (I, 316). Critics need not apologize for the similarity between the Diary and the fiction; Nin knows exactly what she is doing.

In any case, the daughter now stumbles upon a revelation: "And she was thinking: I stopped loving my father a long time ago. What remained was the slavery to a pattern" (WA, 117;

see also I, 318). Again there are further passages which originate in the Diary and find their way into the fiction; we need not quote them here, except to note the recurrence of the image where the daughter clings so fiercely to her father's coat that she has to be torn away. Now that the adult daughter understands how empty her relationship to her father has been, she realizes that "Today she held the coat of a dead love" (WA, 118).

At this point Nin again emphasizes the image of the theatre and its world of illusion where the daughter believed her father to be someone quite other than the man he was. As Evelyn J. Hinz explains,

...the central idea of the falsity of external appearances is presented through a series of images taken from the theatre. Djuna and her father play 'roles.' In her diary she creates 'her double.' Her father wears 'a mask.' When they cannot communicate they are described as 'gesticulating in space.' The novel closes with the following extended metaphor: 'At last she was entering the Chinese theater of her drama and could see the trappings of the play as well as the play itself, see that the settings were made of the cardboard of illusion. She was passing behind the stage.... She could see the strings which rule the scenes, the false storms and the false lightning.' (WA, 118-119)<sup>23</sup>

The end of "Winter of Artifice" contains an allusion to the stillborn fetus that Nin delivered, "a little girl with long eyelashes and slender hands. She was dead" (WA, 119). The daughter comes out of "the ether of the past" to observe her dead child, and to formulate a connection between the two of them: "the little girl in her was dead too. The woman was saved. And with the little girl died the need of a fa-

<sup>23</sup>Hinz, The Mirror And The Garden, p. 55.



ther" (WA, 119). The daughter is now free of her obsession with her father, as Sharon Spencer comments:

The exquisite prose dance of 'Winter of Artifice' portrays how the attempted union and equally necessary separation were accomplished by the intelligent, determined daughter who succeeded in healing the childhood wound inflicted by her father. This liberation is made the easier because the father is incapable of giving the genuine exchange of feeling the daughter longs for. Eventually she realizes that in losing this man as father, she has lost nothing but an image. Accepting this difficult truth, the daughter moves on to build her own life.<sup>24</sup>

As a postscript, it should be noted that "Winter of Artifice" is followed by another story called "The Voice"; in it, the woman whose former involvement is centred around her father is now seeking professional help with an analyst. As Oliver Evans points out: "The reader is expected to infer that she has sought analysis as a result of the traumatic experience with her father; it is in this sense only, that 'The Voice' can be considered a sequel to 'Djuna.'"<sup>25</sup>

What should by now be apparent is the unmistakeable use of Nin's Diary record of Joaquin Nin as the basis for the content of "Winter of Artifice." If there were only a few parallels to be drawn between the Diary and this story, we could say that Nin uses her own lived experience as a catalyst to get the tale started and then creates a father-daughter relationship out of her imagination. However, the numer-

<sup>24</sup>Spencer, Collage of Dreams, pp. 72-73.

<sup>25</sup>Evans, p. 44.

Originally Winter of Artifice was the title for the two stories, "Djuna" and "The Voice," published by Dutton in 1948. The Swallow Press edition of Winter of Artifice, which has been used in this paper, includes three novelettes: "Stella," "Winter of Artifice," and "The Voice."

ous examples of Diary material lifted out of the context of real life and transplanted into the fictive realm make it impossible to suggest that "Winter of Artifice" is rooted in imagination, particularly when the art so blatantly plagiarizes the actual life. In Nin's defense, Evans writes,

Readers of the Diary, seeing certain resemblances between it and 'Winter of Artifice,' may be tempted to identify the character of Djuna with the author, but here a word of warning becomes necessary. Though (especially at this stage) Miss Nin's fiction relies heavily upon her journal, it is important to remember that it is still fiction: Djuna, her father, and the analyst of 'The Voice' are all composite portraits, and the reader must not make the mistake of identifying them completely with any of the real life individuals by whom they were undoubtedly<sup>26</sup> suggested but who are present in them only partially.

It is not my intention in this paper to analyze "Winter of Artifice" for the sole purpose of concluding that the daughter is Anais Nin or that the father is Joaquin Nin; I do not make the mistake, as Oliver Evans warns, of completely identifying the fictional characters with the real life individuals of the Diary. However, I do object to Evans' claim that the actual individuals are present in the fictional characters "only partially." We may allow Nin her slim defense of saying that her fictional characters are "composites," but it is nevertheless certain that the daughter is based more on herself than anyone else, and the father is based on Joaquin Nin more than anyone else.

The previous quote by Oliver Evans continues thus:

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<sup>26</sup> Evans, pp. 44-45.

For unless this caution be observed; the charge made by Vernon Young in The Hudson Review (Autumn, 1948) is only too pertinent here: 'The critical vocabulary balks at the very concept, fiction, for has one not been told that Miss Nin's work is drawn from a massive and never-ending diary? One is morally blackmailed at the start, since, by this entangling alliance, strictly literary criticism is almost proscribed.'<sup>27</sup>

Perhaps it was a mistake for Nin to publish both the Diary and the fiction when it was inevitable that critics would place the two side by side to determine their influence on one another. Had she published only the fiction, there would be no reason to suspect that a great portion of her novels rely on what she, or others around her, experienced. However, had she published only the Diary, her reputation as a writer, such as it is, would be lost. Since both the Diary and the fiction have been published, we can compare both forms to determine the relationship between them. And, in the next chapter concerning Henry Miller, we will have further proof that Nin uses her fiction to plagiarize her life.

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<sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 45.

### CHAPTER III

#### HENRY MILLER, THE "DARK MAN" OF THE DIARY/FICTION

Specialists involved in the study of human behaviour generally concur that the relationship a daughter has with her father is crucial; indeed, it can influence the responses of the daughter toward all men. Should the father-daughter relationship be a poor or disappointing one, the basic attitude that the daughter takes toward all men may be coloured in a negative or pessimistic light. That Nin had an unsatisfactory relationship with her father has been established in the previous chapter; despite her reconciliation with him at a later age, it may be said that the child in Nin sought out a father figure to substitute for the father she yearned for but never had in childhood. As Sharon Spencer says,

Although she feared the unreliability of man as father, Anaïs Nin deeply needed a relationship with a father-figure. The first cycle in her personal evolution is characterized by her repeated attempts to obtain 'fathering' from an older man who would provide her with warmth, a sense of direction, and who would encourage her to write. These 'fathers' were Henry Miller, René Allendy, Otto Rank, and--most important--her own father, Joaquín Nin.<sup>1</sup>

In this chapter, we will examine the role that Henry Miller plays in the life of Anaïs Nin and the influence he comes to have on her writing.

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<sup>1</sup>Spencer, Collage of Dreams, p. 72.

To be sure, perhaps the single most prominent character in Anaïs Nin's Diary, apart from her father and herself, of course, is Henry Miller,<sup>2</sup> the American novelist whose Tropic of Cancer (1934) would eventually earn him the notorious reputation of being a "pornographic" writer.<sup>3</sup> At their first meeting in the winter of 1931, Nin readily acknowledges the common bond of writing which links her to Miller; she immediately appreciates the forcefulness of his style:

I enjoy the power of his writing, the ugly, destructive, fearless cathartic strength. This strange mixture of worship of life, enthusiasm, passionate interest in

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<sup>2</sup>Henry Miller (1891-1980) settled in Paris in 1930, where he wrote Tropic of Cancer (1934), followed by Black Spring (1936), and Tropic of Capricorn (1939). Settled in America in 1944, he wrote The Rosy Crucifixion, consisting of Sexus (1945), Plexus (1949), and Nexus (1960). Among his collection of essays and personal reminiscences are The Cosmological Eye (1939), The World of Sex (1940), Sunday After The War (1944), Books In My Life (1952), and Time of the Assassins (1956). Three volumes of correspondence have appeared: Art and Outrage (1959), Laurence Durrell and Henry Miller: A Private Correspondence (1963), and Letters to Anaïs Nin (1965). [See The Penguin Companion to Literature III: United States and Latin America, edited by Eric Mottran and Malcolm Bradbury (Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 1971), pp. 179-180.]

<sup>3</sup>Tropic of Cancer was published in Paris in 1934 by the Obelisk Press; it seemed for a good many years that only an expurgated version of the novel would appear in the United States (aside from the copies smuggled into the country). On June 24, 1961, twenty-seven years after its publication in Europe, Tropic of Cancer was finally released in the U. S. However, several booksellers were arrested and obscenity suits were brought against Grove Press, the publisher of Cancer. Novelist Leon Uris called the book the "perverted, irrational bubbling from an unhealthy mind." Nevertheless, 198 American writers, including Saul Bellow, John Dos Passos, Lillian Hellman, Alfred Kazin, Norman Mailer, Bernard Malamud, William Styron, Robert Penn Warren, and Edmund Wilson, signed a statement in support of Miller and in condemnation of the attempt at censorship. In 1962, Grove Press spent over \$100,000 in legal fees in its battle against censorship. Charges of obscenity against Henry Miller were not dismissed until October 1964. [Jay Martin, Always Merry and Bright: The Life of Henry Miller (Santa Barbara, California: Capra Press, 1978), pp. 464-465, 471.]

everything, energy, exuberance, laughter, and sudden destructive storms baffles me. Everything is blasted away: hypocrisy, fear, pettiness, falsity. It is an assertion of instinct. He uses the first person, real names; he repudiates order and form and fiction itself. He writes in the uncoordinated way we feel, on various levels at once. (I, 10-11)

Later, in February of 1932, Nin records the change in her initially unreserved praise: "I get tired of his obscenities, of his world of 'shit, cunt, prick, bastard, crotch, bitch,' but I suppose it is the way most people talk and live" (I, 55). Nevertheless, photographs of the two suggest the real friendship of a rather incongruous couple, what with the burly, "ganster-type," bald Miller walking with or talking to the petite, delicate, nearly ethereal Nin. In the Diary, Nin observes other comparisons and contrasts: "Sometimes I feel... that my friendship with Henry is not just a personal one; it also symbolizes one between France and America, between the aristocrat and the common man, the civilized and the primitive. The man of tomorrow will come from the people, will deny civilization" (I, 122). Sharon Spencer comments: "The polarity of their archetypal feminine and masculine characteristics generated tensions but also enormous energy that both writers utilized for personal growth."<sup>4</sup>

From the time of their first encounter, Anaïs and Henry become staunch supporters of one another's work, as Jay Martin points out:

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<sup>4</sup>Sharon Spencer, "A Novel Triangle: Anaïs Nin-Henry Miller-Otto Rank," The Journal of the Otto Rank Association XIV, i (Summer, 1972): 8.

When Anaïs saw the pit of confusion into which [Miller] had fallen in his work on Lawrence, she took up his notes and tried to help him make sense of them, even though the spirit of the book was inimical to her own much more personal work on Lawrence. She counselled him on other work, she always stood ready to talk his artistic problems over with him, she gave him an audience--the first one he had ever really had. She let him know that she wanted him near her.... He was the first person whom she allowed to read her complete 'Diary;' he spoke of this work with reverence and always insisted that she had exposed herself more completely and with greater artistry than he could ever hope to do.<sup>5</sup>

With Henry Miller, Anaïs Nin had found another person whom she could nurture, as if to fulfill her image of herself as a goddess or Muse, certainly as a source of inspiration to Miller. As she writes,

[Henry] is rewriting his first book [Crazy Cock]. He lives from day to day, borrowing, begging, sponging. He wants a set of Proust. I add railroad tickets to them so he can come and see me when he wants to. He has no typewriter. So I give him mine. He likes big meals, so I cook sumptuous ones. I would like to give him a home, an income, security so that he could work. (I, 12)

That Nin, herself a writer, would surrender her typewriter to Henry Miller reveals her desire to nurture Henry.<sup>6</sup> In him she finds the man who can serve as her father substitute.

When Nin questions Henry as to the protective attitude both he and his wife, June, harbour for her, Henry replies, "Because you seemed so utterly fragile." To this recorded quote, Nin adds, "Henry's older mind watching me" (I, 57), a suggestion that she might indeed look on him as a father fi-

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<sup>5</sup>Martin, p. 299.

<sup>6</sup>That Nin, herself a writer, would surrender her typewriter to Henry Miller reveals a disturbing tendency in Anaïs Nin which feminist critics point out: she does not put herself first, rather it is the men in her life and their work, their concerns, their lives, which garner her full attention.

gure. Even Henry comprehends the father-daughter overtones to their relationship.

Henry was telling me about a book I had not read. It was Arthur Machen's Hill of Dreams. I was listening and suddenly he said, 'I am talking almost paternally to you.'

At that moment I knew Henry had perceived the part of me that is half child, the part of me who likes to be amazed, to be taught, to be guided. I became a child listening to Henry, and he became paternal. The haunting image of an erudite, literary father reasserted itself, and the woman became a child again.

I felt as if he had discovered a shameful secret. I ran away from Clichy.

My childlike attitude towards older men. I can see nothing in it but immaturity, a need brought on by the absence of a father. (I, 80)

There is, however, a gradual transition in Nin's feelings for Henry Miller: "Eventually, instead of the daughter eager to receive the wisdom of the older, more self-assured male, Anaïs Nin grew into the role of friend and benefactor to Miller."<sup>7</sup>

As her quasi-father, or at least her great champion against the world, Henry Miller writes an impassioned letter on August 2, 1933, to William A. Bradley, a literary agent who wanted to publish Nin's Diary, but only in part. Here is an excerpt from this letter:

...I have only one concern, and that is the preservation of what I consider to be a valuable document--more than that, a work of art.

For me it is a foregone conclusion that the Journal is a work of the highest standing, that it is indeed altogether unique. Granting that my knowledge of the world's literature is not as extensive as your own, I nevertheless challenge you to cite me a worthy parallel to it. Myself I know of none. None by any man, and most certainly none by a woman. If it were due only to its uniqueness as a female contribution, my unflinching en-

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<sup>7</sup>Spencer, Collage of Dreams, pp. 73-74.



dorsement of it would be entirely justified. But it does not owe its value or importance to this aspect in the least. It is a unique human contribution, doubly so because the female has been naturally more reticent, more reluctant to expose her soul.

...It is a tremendous cross-section of our life today. A tremendous revelation of the evolution of an artist. A most painfully naked exposal of a woman's soul.

One might be tempted to say that Henry Miller had a love-hate relationship with Nin's Diary. After such lavish praise, it seems inconsistent that the same Henry Miller would urge Anaïs Nin not to write so much in the diary any longer. But urge her not to write so much he did. "Henry thinks it is a malady, an outgrowth of loneliness," Nin complains at one point (I, 158). Miller realizes that Nin is spending valuable time writing in the Diary, time that could be better used in writing fiction:

Henry said, 'You must let things accumulate, not use everything immediately. Let things accumulate, rest, ferment: then explode. Not cover all the ground.' He talked like Rank, with tears in his eyes, when he realized that I used the notebook to disentangle myself from human bondages. Pledged with me to think only of my work. (I, 309)

In Volume II of the Diary, Nin records what Henry says to her regarding the emphasis she must learn to place on writing fiction rather than writing in the diary:

You will never catch up with the days. And the record of the days will not satisfy you. A day is not everything. The record of a day goes on and on, and sometimes something bigger is left out, postponed, lost. It will be like a big web which will strangle you. Art requires indifference. You're yielding to your primitive cult of life, to your adoration of it. And each day of record

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<sup>8</sup> Henry Miller, Sunday After The War (Norfolk, Connecticut: New Directions Books, 1944), pp. 277-278.

For Miller's personal overview of Nin's Diary, see Henry Miller, "Un Être Etoilique," The Cosmological Eye (New York: New Directions Pub. Corp., 1939). Reprinted in A Casebook on Anaïs Nin, edited by Robert Zaller (New York: Meridian Books, 1974), pp. 5-23.

arrests the flow. The flow would gather in mystery, cause an explosion, a transmutation. You're also worried about a certain portrait. It isn't complete, like one of Proust's characters. There you talk as an artist. (II, 111-112)

The writing produced by Nin and Miller differs considerably; however, it is not our intention here to suggest that the dichotomy in their work resulted from the opposition of the female to the male artist. Both Miller and Nin wrote about June Miller, Henry in his fiction and Anais in her diary as well as her fiction. The realist of the two, Miller portrayed June in harsh terms. According to Nin's Diary:

[June] died in Paris. She died the night she read Henry's book [manuscript version of Tropic of Cancer], because of his brutality. She wept and repeated over and over again, 'It is not me, it is not me he is writing about. It's a distortion. He says I live in delusions, but it is he, it is he who does not see me, or anyone, as I am, or they are. He makes everything ugly.' (I, 34)

Conversely, Nin wrote as more of a poet; to Henry she said, "I want to fight your realism with all the magic forces of poetry" (I, 58). Nin decided that "Henry cannot impose a pattern on me, because I make my own. And I can make my own portrait too" (I, 147). So Nin wrote House of Incest, a lyrical prose-poem. As Nin said to June:

'I will make a great character out of you, June, I will make a portrait you will like.'

'But not like the poem, House of Incest. I didn't understand that. It was not me.' (I, 147)

In our next chapter we will consider the portrait that Anais Nin created for June Miller, as well as what one woman wrote about the other in the Diary.

In her Diary, Nin writes about Henry Miller from a literary perspective as her fellow artist, and a personal perspec-

tive as her father figure. One suspects that the portrait is not complete, though. Near the end of Diary I, Nin writes about her delivery of a stillborn child; the news of her pregnancy comes as a surprise when there has been no mention of a lover, let alone a husband. Forbearing the possibility of a second Immaculate Conception, it is clear that someone must come forth as the father. One would never guess that Anaïs Nin is married to Hugo Guiler, the Vice-President of the Paris branch of the National City Bank,<sup>9</sup> particularly when neither the name nor the role are mentioned in the Diary; it is rather easy to read the Diary and never even suspect that she is married. As Patricia Meyer Spacks says, "The stillborn fetus might, for all we are told, be a virgin birth."<sup>10</sup> Paul Bri-ans comments further on Nin in the fiction contrasted to Nin in the Diary:

...although all of [Nin's] fiction is infused with sexuality, and often presents sex acts directly and elegantly, the Nin of the diary seems to have hardly any sex life at all. She becomes pregnant and miscarries in the first volume, but we hardly know how. This disciple of D. H. Lawrence... and friend of Henry Miller, has rigidly excluded her sex life from the diary and endowed her characters with the kind of sexuality that the 'I' of the edited diary conceals. The latter is friendly,

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<sup>9</sup>Martin, p. 239. Eventually Hugo Guiler quit his banking job to become an engraver. He changed his name to Ian Hugo; his engravings appear in Nin's books, and in time he became a film-maker. There are many references to Ian Hugo in the Diary after 1939; although Nin mentions his engravings or his films with the highest praise, there is never the slightest clue to suggest that Ian Hugo is married to Anaïs Nin.

For a rare document which outlines Nin's part in one of his films, see Ian Hugo, "The Making of Bells of Atlantis," Mosaic: A Journal for the Comparative Study of Literature and Ideas XI, ii (Winter, 1978): 77-80. A photograph of Hugo is reproduced on page 75.

kind, generous, warm, loving, understanding, and even sensuous, but she almost never seems to have any sex.<sup>10</sup>

One supposes that the information concerning Hugo Guiler appeared in the original diary manuscripts but was later edited out of the published version.<sup>11</sup>

Anaïs Nin and her literary agent, Gunther Stuhlmann, acknowledge the discrepancy between the Diary in the original manuscript and later in the published text:

[The Diary] has to be edited. There are some ethical reasons for editing a diary--there are some people whose lives I am not at liberty to disclose--and there are some repetitions in the diary that are very tiresome. The diary has to be edited, but edited only in leaving out certain things, but not in changing anything. You have to leave out some things because certain people are still alive who would like their lives not to be disturbed.<sup>12</sup>

It is not until Diary VII that Nin finally addresses the matter directly. In a letter to a reader, she explains:

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<sup>10</sup>Paul Brians, "Sexuality and the Opposite Sex: Variations on a Theme by Théophile Gautier and Anaïs Nin," Essays in Literature IV, i (Spring, 1977): 123.

<sup>11</sup>It is too easy for the reader to miss Gunther Stuhlmann's brief reference to "her husband" [see "Introduction," xi] in the list of individuals who did not want to be included in the Diary; many readers who ignore Introductions to books are thus quite confused.

To be sure, what we need is a good biography on Anaïs Nin; the chronological list of important dates at the beginning of Bettina Knapp's book on Nin is not enough. In Diary VII, Nin broaches the subject: "Evelyn Hinz persuaded me that a biography would supply a factual, objective completion of the Diary, which sometimes does not cover all the ground. If I agree, it will be for the Diary as well, to fill in" (VII, 228). Nin must have agreed to this project; in a conversation with Robert Kroetsch at the 1981 Great Canadian Poetry Weekend, I learned his University of Manitoba colleague, Evelyn Hinz, is presently preparing a biography on Anaïs Nin.

<sup>12</sup>Hinz, ed., A Woman Speaks, p. 179.

I do realize the absence of my husband is a serious lack in the Diary, but my husband did not want to be in it and I had to respect that, because I have a right to share my life but not to force this on others more reticent or shy of sharing.

All I can say is that I had all the problems we have all had with marriage but that they can be worked out with good will and awareness. For the moment that is all I can say. I realize your question is natural, and it has been asked often. Someday the entire Diary will be published. I'm sorry I cannot share more at this time. But I don't consider marriage any more difficult than all our other relationships to family, children, friends. They all demand our fullest creativity. They do not happen miraculously. (VII, 251-252)

In a written account which has been proclaimed by the Tagblatt of St. Gallen, Switzerland, as a "daring advance into the psychology of female being,"<sup>13</sup> it is nevertheless apparent that the Diary contains something less than the complete truth. An intimate diary written by a woman ought to contain, one supposes, at least some reference to sexuality; it is, after all, one quantity that makes us human. Nin, however, goes out of her way, it seems, to avoid any such discussion. We must then go to other sources to learn about the existence of Hugo Guiler. His exclusion in the Diary brings about inevitable confusions: if we have no proof that Nin has a husband, may we not assume that the child is not only illegitimate, it is the love child of Henry Miller?<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup>From press releases on the back jacket of Diary I.

<sup>14</sup>In an amusing article where he suggests that Nin's Diary reads "like an invitation to Geritol," Bernard Benstock writes, "What we find is a weary case history, much like that of a burgher hausfrau, that would have bored Freud to doodling. We are invited near the end of the diary to witness the agonies of childbirth by a woman who has never treated us to a single admission of sexual congress, much less conception, and only the nasty suspicion that her father was her lover keeps our interest alive" (p. 803). No other critic has offered this solution to the mystery of Nin's unnamed lover. See Bernard

Certainly Nin and Miller did have a love affair at one point in their lives despite the fact that both of them were married to other partners. Their initial attraction might have been purely intellectual, an acknowledgement and admiration of one writer for another, but soon there was an Anaïs Nin-Hugo Guiler-Henry Miller triangle. "By the end of 1933 Henry had forgotten all about the torments of his two marriages and wanted nothing more than to marry Anaïs," writes Jay Martin. As long as she was married to Guiler, Miller knew he had no opportunity for a romance with his beloved Anaïs. Indeed, one of Nin's motives in becoming an analyst was to provide Miller with an income, part of her generosity in looking after him. While both of them were in New York, Guiler was still in Paris, and eventually Nin returned to him. She "flatly refused to break with her husband. On July 15... 1939, Anaïs and Henry went in separate directions, one by train and the other by ship. Without realizing it, they gave up their last real possibility of a life together."<sup>16</sup>

The postscript to this story is that Anaïs Nin pretended that the affair had never happened.

As recently as 1955 she had become furious when she learned from the galleys that Alfred Perlès had written about her in My Friend, Henry Miller. Insisting that no one must ever know she had any relation to Henry, she finally threatened to sue Perlès if he did not expunge her name from the book. Eventually Perlès was forced to give in to this threat and invent a name for the inventress. On this occasion Miller pointed out to her that, after all, their association had been public and could scarcely be entirely hidden. He was right, of course. As occasional gossip column even linked them together,

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Benstock, "The Present Recaptured: D. H. Lawrence and Others," Southern Review IV, iii (July, 1968), 802-816.

<sup>16</sup>Martin, p. 255-256.

adding heat periodically to her simmering displeasure. Walter Winchell, for instance, wrote in July 1955: 'Miller... had a romance with French novelist Anaïs Nin, whose works were also naughty-biographical... A friend once cracked: "It was very romantic, they had the only boudoir in Paris with twin typewriters."<sup>17</sup>

One may read My Friend, Henry Miller<sup>18</sup> for even subtle clues regarding the relationship between Miller and Nin, but there are none to be found. Neither is Henry Miller: Letters to Anaïs Nin<sup>19</sup> any help in solving the mystery, for it not only was edited by Nin's literary agent, Gunther Stuhlmann, it had to meet her approval, and Nin was determined that no one should know of her relationship with Miller. Indeed, one can sense Nin's disgust when, in Diary VII, she describes an interview with a drunken reporter who asks "if Henry Miller was as good a lover as he purported to be in his novels" (VII, 140).

Now, after the death of both Nin and Miller, a new book by Miller solves the core of the mystery; Miller openly admits to his love affair with Anaïs Nin:<sup>20</sup> "It's rare to find a friend, a confidante, a colleague, a helpmate and a lover all in the same person."<sup>21</sup> Yet Miller's admission does not suggest why Nin felt it so imperative to conceal such an important detail from the readers of the Diary. Unless, of

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 459.

<sup>18</sup>Alfred Perlès, My Friend, Henry Miller: An Intimate Biography (New York: The John Day Company, 1956).

<sup>19</sup>Gunther Stuhlmann, ed., Henry Miller: Letters to Anaïs Nin (New York: Capricorn Books, 1976).

<sup>20</sup>See Appendix II for Miller's thoughts on Anaïs Nin.

<sup>21</sup>Henry Miller, "On Women," from Reflections (Santa Barbara, California: Capra Press, 1981). From an excerpt printed in Oui Magazine X, viii (August, 1981): 56.

course, the solution is to be found in Miller's statement:

Anaïs was overly concerned with what people would think or how they'd react if she told the complete truth about herself. She spent untold hours cutting everything from her diaries that might raise a few eyebrows. She was preoccupied with creating an image that would make everyone love her and think only good things about her, which was ridiculous, impossible. But just wait! When her beloved fans finally get their hands on those uncensored manuscripts, an entirely different personality will emerge. 'Saint Anaïs' will be laid to rest at last, and the real woman, Anaïs Nin, will be born again.<sup>22</sup>

Until the uncensored manuscripts become public property,<sup>23</sup> we must remain ignorant of what Anaïs Nin wrote about her love affair with Henry Miller, for surely she must have written something that she later edited out. For this reason, I call Henry Miller the "dark man" of the Diary/fiction; similar to Shakespeare's "Dark Lady," who was a source of inspiration yet still never identified, Henry Miller's exact role in Nin's writing is obscured. In a diary that purports itself to be an intimate study of one woman's psyche, it is fascinating that she should deny Henry Miller was ever her lover. Nevertheless, it becomes apparent that Henry Miller is the model for the character of Jay in Cities of the Interior, where we will now focus our study.

Indeed, Nin's most impressive work is the five volume

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. 121.

<sup>23</sup>As a point of interest, the diary manuscript (contained in hundreds of notebooks) is kept in a New York bank vault. The manuscripts of the fiction belong to Northwestern University. For a detailed description of these holdings, see Marie-Claire Van der Elst, "The Manuscripts of Anaïs Nin at Northwestern," Mosaic: A Journal for the Comparative Study of Literature and Ideas XI, ii (Winter, 1978): 59-63.



"continuous novel," Cities of the Interior (1959), which is composed of Ladders to Fire (1946), Children of the Albatross (1947), The Four-Chambered Heart (1950), A Spy In The House Of Love (1954), and Seduction of the Minotaur (1961). A "continuous novel" is "a series of works that form a complete unit: characters appear and depart, each character playing out his life against the backdrop of the society of the period."<sup>24</sup> Bettina Knapp explains the advantages of this form:

Nin's continuous novel allowed her to probe her characters in various situations and milieus. These beings, which she labeled 'faulty cellular structures,' are always in search of wholeness or completion. Each explores the question of whether one person may find completion or liberation in another, 'whether through the association of love' one can learn 'to be liberated of false values and false roles,' whether love can help one create and/or re-create his being.<sup>25</sup>

In The Novel of the Future, Nin explains that her diary is directly responsible for her interest in what she calls, in this quote, the "endless novel":

The diary taught me that there were no neat ends to novels, no neat dénouement, no neat synthesis. That in life character changed with experience and continued to grow, expand, and modify itself. There was no finality but death. The conventional novel created artificial ends, climaxes. So becoming aware of this, I began an endless novel, a novel in which the climaxes consisted of discoveries in awareness, each step in awareness becoming a stage in the growth like the layers in trees.<sup>26</sup>

The novels contain a number of recurring characters: Lillian, Djuna, Sabina, and Jay. We note that Cities of the Interior concerns itself with women as a focal point rather than men

<sup>24</sup>Knapp, p. 27.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 22.

<sup>26</sup>Nin, The Novel of the Future, p. 123.

as it was Nin's intention to write about "woman's struggle to understand her own nature.... Women are still occupied in making the world as man wants it, and then trying as best they can to create the one they can breathe in."<sup>27</sup> The main character in Cities of the Interior is Lillian; she is the centre or the hub around which all the other characters revolve, whether it be Sabina or Jay. In her Foreword to early editions of Ladders to Fire, Nin writes, "Man appears only partially in this first volume, because for the woman at war with herself, he can only appear thus, not as an entity."<sup>28</sup>

Although there are three minor male characters in Ladders to Fire, the man who appears and remains in view at least in the second part of the novel is Jay, the Bohemian intellectual artist who becomes Lillian's lover. Nin describes Jay's character this way:

As an opposite to Lillian, I chose the 'freest' and most 'freeing' character I knew, Jay. It was against Jay that I pitted Lillian. His naturalness and relaxation against her high tension, his contagious sensuality against her rigid defenses. Her protective maternal qualities would appeal to him. Her activity against his passivity. If there were in Lillian what we have chosen to define as masculine characteristics, there were in Jay what we define as feminine ones.<sup>29</sup>

In this chapter we will see that Anaïs Nin used Henry Miller as the general pattern for the character of Jay. It should be noted, however, that Nin has managed to distance herself further from her own lived experience so that her fictional characters are not merely copies of people she has known, the

<sup>27</sup>In Oliver Evans, p. 88.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., p. 89.

<sup>29</sup>Nin, The Novel of the Future, p. 60.

way the father in "Winter of Artifice" is undeniably patterned after Joaquin Nin. Instead there are clues which tend to pinpoint Henry Miller as the basic, although perhaps not the sole model for Jay's character. Naturally our effort at tracing the seeds of the fiction in the Diary is complicated by Nin's reluctance to reveal the truth where her relationship with Miller is concerned. Nevertheless, we are not remiss in allowing room for some logical assumptions based on the available evidence; other sources freely admit that Nin and Miller had an affair, and I believe Nin fictionalized that affair as the love relationship between Jay and Lillian.

Jay does not appear in "This Hunger," the first part of Ladders to Fire, until the midpoint. The first paragraph describing his presence is worded thus:

Jay. The table at which he sat was stained with wine. His blue eyes were inscrutable like those of a Chinese sage. He ended all his phrases in a kind of hum, as if he put his foot on the pedal of his voice and created an echo. In this way none of his phrases ended abruptly.<sup>30</sup>

In the Diary, Nin merely mentions that "the mellow tones of his voice are almost like a purring content" (I, 8). Unlike Nin's fictional rendering of her father, which relied so heavily on the Diary material, we will find that this fictionalized version of Henry Miller contains material not originally found in the Diary.

This trend towards more originality of thought, and less reliance on the Diary record of her own lived experience, is not a hard, fast rule, however. Nin still dredges up bits of

<sup>30</sup> Anaïs Nin, Ladders to Fire (Denver: Alan Swallow, 1959), p. 50. All future references to this book will be cited in the text of the essay. The title will be abbreviated to LF, and a page reference will follow.

information and transplants them when and where it is convenient. In her Diary, she writes:

When I saw Henry Miller walking towards the door where I stood waiting, I closed my eyes for an instant to see him by some other inner eye. He was warm, joyous, relaxed, natural.

He would have passed anonymously through a crowd. He was slender, lean, not tall. He looked like a Buddhist monk, a rosy-skinned monk, with his partly bald head aureoled by lively silver hair, his full sensuous mouth. His blue eyes are cool and observant, but his mouth is emotional and vulnerable. His laughter is contagious and his voice caressing and warm like a Negro voice. (I, 8)

Different and yet similar is the passage in Ladders to Fire:

When they met, and she saw him walking towards her, she felt he would never stop walking towards her and into her very being: he would walk right into her being with his soft lazy walk and purring voice and his mouth slightly open.

She could not hear his voice. His voice rumbled over the surface of her skin, like another caress. She had no power against his voice. It came straight from him and into her. She could stuff her ears and still it would find its way into her blood and make it rise. (LF, 52)

In noting details about Henry Miller in the Diary, Nin writes, "He can be swept off his feet easily by a book, a person, an idea. He is a musician and a painter" (I, 11). Of Jay, it is written: "Brightly gifted, he painted while he enjoyed the painting; the accidental marvels of colours, the pleasant shock of apparitions made in a game with paint" (LF, 53). During his lifetime, Henry Miller produced many watercolours; he, too, loved to paint.

However, unlike Miller, Jay is a hack pianist<sup>31</sup> rather than a writer, although painting is his first love. With in-

<sup>31</sup>Perhaps it is the daughter's rebellion to be associated with a man who does not take piano playing seriously, as her father does. Perhaps Nin is even ridiculing her father's devotion to music.

tense glee, he describes to Lillian how he'd been offered an unexpected job:

He opened his soft animal mouth a little, as if in expectancy of a drink. But instead, he said (as if he had absorbed Lillian's face and voice in place of the drink), 'I'm happy. I'm too happy.' Then he began to laugh, to laugh, to laugh, with his head shaking like a bear, shaking from right to left as if it were too heavy a head. 'I can't help it. I can't help laughing. I'm too happy. Last night I spent the night here. It was Christmas and I didn't have the money for a hotel room. And the night before I slept at a movie house. They overlooked me, didn't sweep where I lay. In the morning I played the movie piano. In walked the furious manager, then he listened, then he gave me a contract starting this evening.' (LF, 51)

Again, in this Diary excerpt about Henry Miller we will observe the genesis of that fragment:

In the middle of a serious discussion between Richard and Joaquin, he began to laugh. Seeing the perplexity on Richard's face, he said, 'I'm not laughing at you, Richard, but I just can't help myself. I don't care a bit who's right. I'm too happy. I'm just so happy right at this moment, with all the colours around me, the fire in the fireplace, the good dinner, the wine, the whole moment is so wonderful, so wonderful...

"Last night I spent the night in a cinéma de quartier. I had nowhere else to go. Richard was entertaining his girl. I watched the film three times because the actress reminded me of my wife, June. Then I slipped down into the seat and went to sleep. They never clean up the place until morning and even then the femme de ménage only grunts when she sees me and lets me off.' (I, 8-9)

Nin has come to use her Diary as a notebook for ideas rather <sup>as</sup> than a source of actual scenes and verbatim conversations for the fiction. There are similarities between the Diary and the fiction, but by now Nin has matured enough as a writer that she is beginning to trust her powers of imagination.

Just as Anaïs Nin surrendered her typewriter to Henry Miller so he would have the machine to aid his writing while she looked after him, so, too, does Lillian "[give] up play-

ing in order to work for Jay's support. She had surrendered any hope of becoming a concert pianist to attend to their immediate needs" (LF, 63-64). Thus Lillian protects Jay, even "mothers" Jay:

She opened as the refuge opens; not conscious that it was a man who entered (man of whom she had a certain suspicion) but a child in need. Because he knocked as a beggar for a retreat, as a victim seeking solace, as a weakling seeking sustenance, she opened the door without suspicion. (LF, 59)

Jay has no yen for the seriousness, the dull routine, and the regular hours demanded by conventional work, so he instead options for the life of a "hobo" (LF, 55-56); Lillian takes the matter into her hands and declares, "I will have to work, then.... One of us has to work" (LF, 56). So Lillian supports Jay financially, emotionally, physically, in almost every possible way: "His hunger for anything metamorphosed her into an Aladdin's lamp: even his dreams must be fulfilled" (LF, 58).<sup>32</sup>

As we are denied any description of intimacy between Anais and Henry in the Diary, what we find in Ladders to Fire concerning Lillian and Jay must suffice:

His taking her was not to take her or master her. He was the lover inside of the woman, as the child is inside of the woman. His caresses were as if he yearned to be taken in not only as a lover; not merely to satisfy his desire but to remain within her. And her yearning

<sup>32</sup>Nin writes in Diary I: "Joaquin [her brother, not her father] questions my giving to Henry. Why curtains for Henry? Why shoes for Henry? Why writing paper and books for Henry? And me? And me? Joaquin does not understand how spoiled I am. Henry gives me the world. June gave me madness. They gave me two beings I can admire. How grateful I am to find two people who interest me unreservedly. They are generous to me in a way I cannot explain to Joaquin. Can I explain to Joaquin that Henry gives me his water colours, and June her only bracelet?" (I, 61)

answered this, by her desire to be filled. She never felt him outside of herself. Her husband had stood outside of her, and had come to visit her as a man, sensually. But he had not lodged himself as Jay had done, by reposing in her, with such feeling of physical intermingling as she had had with her child. Her husband had come to be renewed, to emerge again, to leave her and go to his male activities, to his struggles with the world. (LF, 61)

Only the latter portion of this quotation appears in the Diary: "Man lies in a woman's womb only to gather strength, he nourishes himself from this fusion, and then rises and goes into the world, into his work, into battle, into art" (I, 206).

Ironically, despite the gentle, tender side to Lillian's lover, both Jay and Henry Miller like prostitutes. In the Diary (I, 58-60), Nin describes the time Henry Miller takes her to 32 Rue Blondel in Paris to see the whores. In the smoky, noisy cafe filled with men and naked women, Henry drinks while Nin discusses nail polish with the two prostitutes seated with them at the table. Later, the two women demonstrate sixty-six ways of making love up in their room and end up actually making love to one another beyond all the charades and jokes. To Anaïs Nin, Henry Miller says, "I like the prostitutes. There is no pretense there. They wash themselves in front of you" (I, 10). In Ladders to Fire, Nin has this to say about Jay: "He liked prostitutes. 'Because one does not have to make love to them, one does not have to write them beautiful letters.' He liked them, and he liked to tell Lillian how much he liked them. He had to share all this with Lillian" (LF, 61).

If we keep in mind what we know about Nin's delivery of

a stillborn child, and the child's father whom she never identifies, the following passage is intriguing:

Lillian confessed to Jay that she was pregnant. He said: 'We must find the money for an abortion.' He looked irritated. She waited. She thought he might slowly evince interest in the possibility of a child. He revealed only an increased irritation. It disturbed his plans, his enjoyment. The mere idea of a child was an intrusion. He let her go alone to the doctor. He expressed resentment. And then she understood.

She sat alone one day in their darkened room. She talked to the child inside of her.

'My little one not born yet, I feel your small feet kicking against my womb. My little one not born yet, it is very dark in the room you and I are sitting in, just as dark as it must be for you inside of me, but it must be sweeter for you to be lying in the warmth than it is for me to be seeking in this dark room the joy of not knowing, not feeling, not seeing; the joy of lying still in utter warmth and this darkness. All of us forever seeking this warmth and this darkness, this being alive without pain, this being alive without anxiety, fear or loneliness. You are impatient to live, you kick with your small feet, but you ought to die. You ought to die in warmth and darkness, you ought to die because you are a child without a father. You will not find on earth this father as large as the sky, big enough to hold your whole being and your fears, larger than house or church. You will not find a father who will lull you and cover you with his greatness and his warmth. It would be better if you died inside of me, quietly, in the warmth and in the darkness.'

Did the child hear her? At six months she had a miscarriage and lost it. (LF, 78)

Surely Lillian's obsession regarding her child's lack of a father only echoes much of what we have quoted in the last chapter from the Diary record of Nin's fears concerning her own father. The miscarriage is also a remnant from Nin's own life, now transplanted here in the fiction. What Nin writes in her Diary during August 1934 is remarkably similar to the passage from Ladders to Fire:

'So full of energy, my child. How much better it would be if you had stayed away from earth, in obscurity and unconsciousness, in the paradise of non-being. My little one, not born yet, you are the future. I would prefer to



live with men, in the present, not with a future extension of myself into the future.

'I feel your small feet kicking against my womb. It is very dark in the room we are sitting in, just as dark as it must be for you inside of me, but it must be sweeter for you to be lying in the warmth than it is for me to be seeking, in this dark room, the joy of not knowing, not feeling, not seeing, the joy of lying still and quiet in utter warmth and darkness. All of us forever seeking again this warmth and this darkness, this being alive without pain, this being alive without anxiety or aloneness.

'You are impatient to live, you kick with your small feet, my little one not born yet. You ought to die in warmth and darkness. You ought to die because in the world there are no real fathers, not in heaven or on earth.' (I, 338)

'There is no father on earth. We were deluded by this shadow of God the Father cast on the world, a shadow larger than man. This shadow you would worship and seek to touch, dreaming day and night of its warmth, and of its greatness, dreaming of it covering you and lulling you, larger than a hammock, as large as the sky, big enough to hold your soul and all your fears, larger than man or woman, than church or house, the shadow of a magic father who is nowhere to be found. It is the shadow of God the Father. It would be better if you died inside of me, quietly, in the warmth and in the darkness.' (I, 399-340)

In this circumstance, at least, it is clear that Anaïs Nin is patterning the character of Lillian after herself; we have previously established good cause to believe that Jay is patterned in part after Henry Miller. Still, it is impossible for us to conclusively state that Miller is the father of Anaïs Nin's stillborn child, or that Nin is merely once again borrowing details from her own life to supply her fiction with workable material. In the Diary, Nin does not name the father of her child, and thus it must remain a mystery.

In "Bread And The Wafer," the second part of Ladders to Fire, the relationship between Jay and Lillian expands to include another woman named Sabina. It has been previously established that the character of Jay is patterned after

Henry Miller and, although Nin claims that the character of Lillian in Cities of the Interior "I left as a fictional character,"<sup>33</sup> it becomes apparent that Nin, at least to some degree, uses herself as the pattern for Lillian. In the next chapter we will observe that Nin also employs June Miller as the prototype for the character of Sabina, the woman who becomes Lillian's rival for Jay's affections. It should be noted also that Nin exercises her literary powers to alter reality where the triangle of involvements is concerned. In reality, June and Henry Miller are married and Anaïs is the intruder who poses a threat to the union; in fiction, Lillian/Anaïs and Jay/Henry are romantically involved with one another and living without the benefit of the clergy, while it is Sabina/June who steps in to threaten the stability of that relationship.

Jay's role in the triangle soon places him on the periphery of the main action. When he first meets Sabina during his explorations of the Dome, the Select, and the Rotonde, he feels a negative attraction towards her. A double standard is most assuredly present, for Jay cannot bear to allow Sabina what he demands as his male privilege:

Jay saw in her immediately the woman without fidelity, capable of all desecrations. That a woman should do this, wear no wedding ring, love according to her caprice and not be in bondage to the one. (A week before he was angry with Lillian for considering him as the unique and irreplaceable one, because it conferred on him a responsibility he did not wish to assume, and he was wishing she might consider an understudy who would occasionally relieve him of his duties!) (LF, 1112)

Just as the relationship with Jay and Sabina is filled with

<sup>33</sup>English, "An Interview with Anaïs Nin," p. 191.

the inevitable turbulence of their negative attraction towards one another, the relationship between Henry and June Miller is also filled with tension.

With Lillian, Jay feels "like a man accumulating a vast debt in terms he could never meet" (LF, 113). Conversely, "she was well able to take care of herself and to answer treachery with treachery" (LF, 113). In a ménage à trois, if an imbalance occurs, so to speak, it is usually the result of the man becoming more interested in one woman than the other. However, the imbalance in the ménage à trois consisting of Jay, Lillian, and Sabina results in an exclusive relationship between Lillian and Sabina which will be considered in greater detail in the following chapter. The two women are the ones to occupy the majority of "Bread And The Wafer."

Neither Jay, Lillian, nor Sabina appear until the second part of Children of the Albatross, which is entitled, "The Café." Here Jay's role is far less than it is in Ladders to Fire; here Jay makes passionate love early one morning to Lillian and "he awakened free, and she did not."<sup>34</sup> Unlike Jay, who is content to enjoy the moment of physical release and then move on into the day, Lillian's body is "filled with retentions, residues, sediments" (CA, 129). Here Nin writes,

He awakened and passed into other realms. The longer his stay in the enfolding whirls, the greater his energy to enter activity again. He awakened and he talked of painting, he awakened laughing, eyes closed with laughter, laughing on the edge of his cheeks, laughter in the corner of his mouth, the laughter of great separateness.

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<sup>34</sup>Anaïs Nin, Children of the Albatross (London: Peter Owen Limited, 1959). All future references to this book will be cited in the text of the essay; the title will be abbreviated to CA, and a page reference will follow.

She awakened unfree, as if laden with seeds of his being, wondering at what moment he would pull his whole self away as one tears a plant out by the roots, leaving a crevice in the earth. Dreading the break because she felt him a master of this act, free to enter and free to emerge, whereas she felt dispossessed of her identity and freedom because Jay upon awakening did not turn about and contemplate her even for a moment as Lillian, a particular woman, but that when he took her, or looked at her he did so gaily, anonymously, as if any woman lying there would have been equally pleasant, natural, and not Lillian among all women. (CA, 129)

The issue at hand is the difference in sexual attitudes between men and women; Nin illustrates Jay as a somewhat detached lover who fails to be the romantic worshipper that the highly-emotional Lillian craves. Much earlier in her Diary, Nin outlines her observation of the basic attitudes towards sex, particularly the way in which women are more emotionally involved in the act:

Man can never know the kind of loneliness a woman knows. Man lies in a woman's womb only to gather strength, he nourishes himself from this fusion, and then he rises and goes into the world, into his work, into battle, into art. He is not lonely. He is busy. The memory of the swim in amniotic fluid gives him energy, completion. The woman may be busy too, but she feels empty. Sensuality for her is not only a wave of pleasure in which she has bathed, but a charge of electric joy at contact with another. When man lies in her womb, she is fulfilled, each act of love is a taking of man within her, an act of birth and rebirth, of child-bearing and man-bearing. Man lies in her womb and is reborn each time anew with a desire to act, to BE. But for woman, the climax is not in the birth, but in the moment when man rests inside of her. (I, 106)

Here, then, is an example of Nin using her Diary as a storehouse for ideas which are later interwoven into her fiction.

Perhaps with the image of Henry Miller in her mind, Nin creates Jay as a man who loves women in general rather than devoting himself to the exclusiveness of one love. While romantically involved with Lillian, Jay is also well acquainted with Sabina, the model for his paintings: "He painted her as

a mandrake with fleshly roots, bearing a solitary purple flower in a purple bell-shaped corolla of narcotic flesh" (CA, 131). There is also Djuna, who serves as Jay's confidant: "When he was tormented by a half-formed image he went to Djuna, just as once walking through the streets with her he had seen a child bring her a tangled skein of string to unravel" (CA, 133). More than just his confidant, though, Djuna seems to be a source of inspiration to his work. Since "Djuna's image [is] too tenuous for him," he never paints her, and yet "when she was there he painted better" (CA, 132). Whereas Lillian is jealous of the time he gives to Sabina and Djuna, Jay simply believes that "there were places into which Lillian could not follow him. Lillian would like to have Jay come to her for anything he needs; Jay, however, knows only too well that it is impossible for her to be everything to him."

He would have liked the three women to love each other. It seemed to him that then he would be at peace. When they pulled against each other for supremacy it was as if different parts of his own body pulled against each other. (CA, 133)

After this episode, the central action in Children of the Albatross moves away from Jay to focus on Lillian's disillusionment with Jay's infidelities, his tendency to place women other than Lillian herself at the center of his universe. Lillian sees her only recourse is in escaping what she deems an intolerable situation, and so she leaves Jay.

His character emerges again in The Four-Chambered Heart only in Djuna's reference to his painting. When Djuna's lover, Rango, criticizes her belief in Jay as a great painter, he jealousy says, "Of course you'll defend Jay... he was part of

your former life, of your former values. I will never be able to alter that."<sup>35</sup> The focus in this novel is on a ménage à trois which includes Djuna, Rango, and his wife, Zora. Simply because we already have explored Nin's use of the triangular relationship of Jay, Lillian, and Sabina and their real-life correlatives, there is a temptation to draw parallels between the two triangles. This, however, is not possible since the character of Rango is patterned after a revolutionary named Gonzalo (as described in detail in Diary III),<sup>36</sup> and the two women are neither June Miller nor Anaïs Nin. A more widescale exploration of all the characters in the fiction would permit further consideration of the connection between Gonzalo and Rango; for our purposes, the study will be confined to the fictional characters of Lillian, Sabina, and Jay.

Jay is not interwoven into the fabric of A Spy In The House Of Love until the last twenty pages. The story in this novel centres around Sabina, her husband, and her many lovers. Jay again enters the mainstream of action in reference to his paintings which Sabina recognizes on the walls of Mambo's Night Club. At first glance, Sabina comprehends the meaning of Jay's art: "She could see at this moment on the wall an exact portrait of herself as she felt inside."<sup>37</sup> When Sabina

<sup>35</sup>Anaïs Nin, The Four-Chambered Heart (Chicago: The Swallow Press, Inc., 1959), p. 50.

<sup>36</sup>In Diary V Nin writes, "I am working at the fiction of Gonzalo become Rango [The Four-Chambered Heart]" (V, 33). Obviously the fictive character is patterned after a real-life model.

<sup>37</sup>Anaïs Nin, A Spy In The House Of Love (New York: Bantam Books, 1959), p. 93. All future references to this book will be cited in the text of the essay; the title will be abbreviated to SHL, and a page reference will follow.

turns from the painting to see Jay at a table, her description of him corresponds to Nin's earlier description of Henry Miller: "...his face more than ever before resembling Lao Tze. His half bald head rimmed now with frosty white hair, his half-closed, narrow, small eyes laughing" (SHL, 94). Seven years have passed since the time all of them used to congregate in the Paris cafés.

Despite the passage of time, however, Sabina realizes that the caricaturist in Jay has not died: "...he was a satirist, and all she would obtain from him at this moment was a caricature, which she could not take lightly or dismiss" (SHL, 100). Indeed, this is another character trait that Nin has passed from Henry Miller down to Jay. When June Miller, the model for Sabina, reads what Henry has written about her in Tropic of Cancer, she says, "It is not me, it is not me he is writing about. It's a distortion. He says I live in delusions, but it is he, it is he who does not see me, or anyone, as I am, as they are. He makes everything ugly" (I, 34). Nin adds, "It takes great hatred to make caricature and satire" (I, 12). Jay believes in brutal honesty where Sabina resorts to the safe, shadowy world of illusions, as we will see in the next chapter. In A Spy In The House Of Love, Jay again slips into obscurity so that the story of Sabina may be told.

At this point it appears that Nin's tendency to rely on the Diary record to produce material for her fiction is only a sign of an immature writer; as time separates her from her experiences with Henry Miller in Paris, she not only writes less about the character of Jay, but what she writes grows

progressively freer from the actual experience. In short, it appears that Nin has outgrown her reliance on her memory of Henry Miller which suggests so much of Jay's character. By the time she writes A Spy In The House Of Love in 1954, it seems as though Nin might have finally freed herself from the compulsion to convert her own lived experience and that of the people around her into fiction.

This proposition, however, must be dispensed with in light of the return to the Lillian-Jay-Sabina triangle in Seduction of the Minotaur, the final volume of the continuous novel, Cities of the Interior. Although the triangle does not appear until the end of the novel, it is revealing that Nin still makes a reference to the trio rooted in real life as well as the fictive life. Nin uses the latter part of this novel to recap all that she has said about Jay and Lillian: how Jay went to Paris to be among the painters he admired, and how Lillian saw to all his needs and encouraged his work.<sup>38</sup> Indeed, Nin could just as easily be writing about her own experiences with Miller when she writes the following passage about Jay and Lillian:

When they first met he was proofreading in a newspaper office. His paintings were not selling yet. The work irritated his eyes. He would come to his room and the first thing he would do was to wash his inflamed eyelids. Lillian watched him, watched the red-rimmed eyes, usually laughing, and now withered by fatigue, and watering. These eyes which he needed for his work, wasted on proofreading under weak lights on greyish paper. These eyes he needed to drink in the world and all its profusion of images.

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<sup>38</sup> Anaïs Nin, Seduction of the Minotaur (Chicago: The Swallow Press, Inc., 1973), p. 115. All future references to this book will be cited in the text of the essay; the title will be abbreviated to SM, and a page reference will follow.



'Jay,' said Lillian, extending a glass of red wine. 'Drink to the end of your job at the paper. You will never have to do it again. I earn enough for both of us when I play every night.' (SM, 120)

In an April 1932 section of the Diary, we read:

At Clichy we were sitting in the kitchen with Fred. A small window looks down on the courtyard. We had finished a bottle of wine. We were smoking heavily, and Henry had to get up and wash his eyes with cold water, the irritated eyes of the little German boy.

I could not bear this and I said impetuously, 'Henry, let's drink to the end of your newspaper work. You will never do it again. I will take care of you.' (I, 78)

There is an additional section in which Nin describes what Lillian and Jay do with their time together:

Lillian adopted all his infatuations and enthusiasms: she sat with him contemplating from a café table the orange face of a clock, the prostitute with the wooden leg; played chess at the Café de la Regence at the very table where Napoleon and Robespierre had played chess. She helped him gather and note fifty ways of saying drunk. (SM, 115)

What Lillian and Jay do with their time is not radically different from what Anaïs and Henry do:

He is fascinated with the sound of words. He notes fragments of conversation on menus, toilet paper, envelopes. He takes me to the Mariner's flophouse to eat an omelet (sic) with pickpockets. He plays chess at the café where old actors meet for a game to the tune of tired classical musicians playing quartets. At dawn he likes to sit and watch the tired prostitutes walking home. (I, 16)

It is important to note that there has indeed been a change in Nin's writing. In Ladders to Fire, she relies an enormous amount on her Diary account for the outline of her fiction; by the time she comes to write Seduction of the Minotaur, there is still some reliance on the Diary for ideas, but, as the two aforementioned passages illustrate, she is able to alter enough details so that her fiction involves a bit more than merely copying passages from the Diary to transplant into the fiction.

In The Novel of the Future, Nin states, "...Seduction of the Minotaur was the first book I wrote without any dependence on the diary."<sup>39</sup> This is, for the most part, true, in the sense that the story of Lillian in Golconda is basically a product of Nin's imagination. However, the return to the Lillian-Jay-Sabina triangle reminds us of Ladders to Fire and the intense degree to which Nin relies on her Diary to provide material for her fiction. If we may use the illustrations culled from Seduction of the Minotaur as the case in point, it becomes clear that Nin still has a slight dependence on the Diary.

A study of the presence of Henry Miller in the Diary and Jay in Cities of the Interior is not an easy task. I suspect that Nin is far more honest in her portrait of her father in the Diary than she is with her portrait of Henry Miller, perhaps because she feels no compulsion to conceal or at least confuse the reader about her relationship with her father. With Henry Miller, it is quite another matter. Nin readily acknowledges the presence of Henry Miller the Father Figure in her Diary, but the possibility of Henry Miller the Romantic Figure or Henry Miller the Lover she flatly denies. The psychological motivation which spurs her on to such screening or masking of the actual truth might one day be uncovered when, as Henry Miller suggested before his death, the diary manuscripts are released to the reading public and all the facts of what she indeed did write about Henry Miller are known.

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<sup>39</sup>Nin, The Novel of the Future, p. 140.

Until then, however, at least where Nin's published Diary and the fiction are concerned, Henry Miller must remain "the dark man."

We have considered the Lillian-Jay-Sabina triangle only so far as Lillian and Jay are concerned. Thus, in the following chapter, we will consider the character of Sabina and the actual person after whom she is patterned, June Miller.

## CHAPTER IV

"YOU ARE THE WOMAN I WANT TO BE":

ANAÏS/LILLIAN AND JUNE/SABINA

I spent more time on the women characters because I understood them better, because I felt they had more conflicts than men, and above all because I felt that a great part of woman was as yet inarticulate.<sup>1</sup>

So far it would seem that Nin spends most of her time writing in her diary about the various men in her life, apart from writing about herself and her own impressions of the world. This, however, is simply not the case. In Diary I there emerges a fascinating portrait of one woman in particular who influences Nin's life and art to a major degree; she not only occupies a central role in the published Diary, she can be called a catalyst of sorts, the inspiration, indeed, the Muse who guides Nin to one of the recurring themes of her fiction. The woman is June Miller, Henry Miller's second wife.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Nin, The Novel of the Future, p. 75.

<sup>2</sup>June Edith Smith Miller, Henry Miller's second wife, also used the name June Mansfield. She appears under different fictitious names in the body of Miller's work, and it is she to whom Tropic of Cancer is dedicated ("To Her"). They met in New York in 1923 and were married in 1924. In 1928, June and Henry Miller made their first trip to Europe, which lasted almost a year, and took them to various parts of France, Austria, Hungary, Roumania, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Germany. When Miller went back to Paris in 1930, June remained in the United States, but made two visits to Paris in the fall of 1931 and during the winter of 1932. The marriage ended in divorce in 1934. [Stuhlmann, "Some Biographical Notes" in Henry Miller:

One could speculate that Nin and June Miller ought to become rivals rather than friends since both of them were emotionally involved with Henry Miller.<sup>3</sup> However, the very first lines that Nin writes about her meeting with June clearly suggest that the relationship between the two women will be a far cry from the pitting of one adversary against another:

As June walked towards me from the darkness of the garden into the light of the door, I saw for the first time the most beautiful woman on earth. A startlingly white face, burning dark eyes, a face so alive, I felt it would consume itself before my eyes. Years ago I tried to imagine a true beauty; I created in my mind an image of just such a woman. I had never seen her until last night. Yet I knew long ago the phosphorescent color of her skin, her huntress profile, the evenness of her teeth. She is bizarre, fantastic, nervous, like someone in a high fever. Her beauty drowned me. As I sat before her, I felt I would do anything she asked of me. Henry suddenly faded. She was color and brilliance and strangeness. (I, 20)

This intensely sensual and powerful description of Nin's first impressions of June differ considerably from the initial words she writes about Henry Miller [see page 57]. There the words "sensuous," "emotional," and "vulnerable" suggest a sympathetic and sensitive awareness of another person who might one day become a friend; it is the description of a magnetic, compelling personality. However, the spark of friendship is paltry compared to the metaphorical bolt of lightning which strikes Nin when June walks into the room. This contrast of

Letters to Anaïs Nin, pp. 244-245.]

<sup>3</sup>For a consideration of Nin as woman [her relationship with June Miller] and as artist [her relationship with Henry Miller] from a Jungian point of view, see Stephanie A. Demetrakopoulos, "Archetypal Constellations of Feminine Consciousness in Nin's First Diary," Mosaic: A Journal for the Comparative Study of Literature and Ideas XI, ii (Winter, 1978): 121-137.

initial portraits immediately clues the reader to the sort of relaxed, comfortable, easy relationship that Nin is to have with Henry, and the agitated, oftentimes tense and difficult relationship that Nin is to have with June, the paragon of true beauty.

There is a complex attraction that exists between the two women as well as a basic understanding of each other, "every detail and every nuance" (I, 23). The second time they talk, Nin tells June: "You're the only woman who ever answered the fantasies I had about what a woman should be" (I, 24). And in her Diary, Nin writes about her desire to become immersed with June Miller, her joy at holding hands with her as they come out of the theatre, and her need to put her arms around June: "...I am willing to enter death to follow her, to embrace her. I must embrace her, I thought..." (I, 25). Anaïs understands that June moves some part of her, yet she is not certain what part: "June does not reach the same sexual center of my being as man reaches. She does not touch that. What, then, does she move in me?" (I, 25). Anaïs writes about "the luxuriance of the flesh, its vivid tones, the fevered eyes and the weight of the voice, its huskiness, [which] became instantly conjugated with sensual love" (I, 26); she writes about June in a way that one woman usually does not write about another.

What must now be decided is whether or not the intense feelings are part of an adolescent infatuation or a school-girl crush on another woman. Or is it a simple acknowledgment of one woman sexually desiring another? Nin says,

...What do I want? I want to grasp June's hands, find out whether this love of woman is real or not.

...In the taxi, I could hardly think clearly when she pressed my hand to her breast, and I kept her hand and I was not ashamed of my adoration, my humility, for she is older, she knows more, she should be leading me, initiating me, taking me out of smoky fantasies into experience. (I, 28)

For Nin, the attraction is more than a schoolgirl crush, for she is obviously willing to become June's lover; it is impossible, however, to be sure how June feels since she cloaks herself in an aura of mystery. Yet, surprisingly, June reveals her attraction towards women: "I have faced my feelings. I am fully aware of them. But I have never found anyone I wanted to live them out with, so far. I am not so sure what it is I want to live out" (I, 30).

Once June has admitted her love for women and Anaïs has confessed to herself in the diary that she hopes June will be her first lesbian lover, the atmosphere between the two women is understandably charged with tension and an unbearable sort of nervousness. The courtship includes the exchange of telephone calls and telegrams as declarations of devotion. One day June dresses in a pair of Anaïs's sheer black stockings, puts on some of her perfume, shops for a pair of sandals like hers, everything "symbolic or representative of me... although she said she had never wanted to imitate anyone else before" (I, 32). After Anaïs declares her love for June, she presents the woman with the wine-coloured handkerchief, the coral earrings, and the turquoise ring that June admired. Then Anaïs describes what it is like to be with the woman she loves:

When we walked the streets, bodies close together, arm in arm, hands locked, I was in such ecstasy I could not

talk. The city disappeared, and so did the people. The acute joy of our walking together through the grey streets of Paris I shall never forget, and I shall never be able to describe it. We were walking above the world, above reality, into pure, pure ecstasy. (I, 32)

Then it is June's turn to bestow a present upon Anaïs: she gives her a silver bracelet with a cat's eye stone which Anaïs considers to be symbolical of June. Later, at lunch, Anaïs recalls: "I told her I felt her bracelet clutched my wrist like her very own fingers, holding me in slavery. She wanted my cape around her body" (I, 37)

After a separation of many months, June returns in October, 1932, to see Henry and Anaïs in France once more. This time Anaïs's portrait of June is far less romantic, far more realistic. The former paragon of true beauty is suffering from the sort of mental strain which distorts the image of an ethereal, other-worldly June and replaces it with an image of a troubled, anxious woman.

As I leave June in a taxi, she looks at me like a child. As I walk away, I see her face blurred behind the taxi window, a tormented, hungry face, unsure of love, frightened, struggling desperately to wield power through mystery. She is under a great strain. Every gesture is a gesture of frenzied singularity, to compel attraction, love. Strain. (I, 137)

This time Anaïs finds another image to depict June's desperation: "As I saw June's pale face through the glass, she looked like a woman drowning" (I, 38). It is the recurrent phrase Nin now uses to describe June Miller.

In the end it is June, who has controlled so much of the relationship she formed with Henry and Anaïs, who chooses to leave for New York and allow Henry and Anaïs to nurture their friendship. She stays up until dawn talking to Anaïs one



night about the hopelessness of Henry and herself ever understanding one another, and Anaïs calls it June's "abdication" (I, 153). Before they part, June leaves Anaïs with some important words of advice regarding Henry and writing: "Don't let him destroy your mind and your work. Remember that your work comes first" (I, 153). From the evidence presented in the Diary, we must note that the relationship between the two women is never consummated, much to Nin's disappointment.

In Volume VII of the Diary, Nin is still connecting the possibility of loving women with loving June, and lamenting that such a love was never realized. During the winter of 1971-1972, Nin writes:

Beatrice. A very beautiful woman, with long black hair, large eyes, a voluptuous body. Magnetic. She is a psychiatrist and a scientist. She bears some resemblance to June except that in June sensuality ruled whereas in Beatrice the intellectual dominates. She is so beautiful in a sensual way that she reawakened the question which was never answered: my love of woman, which reaches up to the sensual frontier and no further. But it stirs in the depth of my unconscious, aware that it nearly asserted itself. The question was never answered because June did not initiate me at the time when I might have been awakened. It has remained like a small area un-lived in my life. In fact the only one.

If I were thirty Beatrice would have disturbed me. Now with my love entirely focused on man, I can admire, love, enjoy the friendship of women, draw very close to them without any sensual vibration. It is a happy state because I can love them naturally, deeply, and without ambivalence.

At Sharon's house, with a beautiful Southern American woman at the piano, I had a reverie of what might happen if I were granted a second life; I might enjoy the one delight I missed. (I, 198)

In light of the fact that Nin appears to generate regrets concerning the fact that June never "initiated" a love affair between the two of them, it is ironic that Nin's attitude towards women-identified-women is still inconsistent, neither

wholly approving nor disapproving, but in a sense tending more towards the latter than towards the former. In one instance, she takes on a laissez-faire attitude, acknowledging that "I think the only taboos should be on not loving,"<sup>4</sup> and that there should not be any differentiation between the love possible between men and women and the love possible between women:

I think that relationship and love are very complex and that sometimes they work better in one combination than in another. Our greatest difficulty is simply finding the person who is suited, who really is suited to our temperament. I don't think it matters whether it is a man or a woman.

Despite this liberal stance, however, Nin appears disapproving of lesbianism: "What I have found in my own personal experience is that there is in homosexuality more immaturity and narcissism."<sup>6</sup> Perhaps as a form of insurance against the pressure of confronting lesbian tendencies within herself, Nin evolves a "safe" theory regarding her relationship with June Miller:

It seemed to me that my love of June was really not for June; she was the woman I wanted to be. There was this attraction to a projected part of myself. It was really identification; I realized that we were not two people; but that she was really the woman I wanted to be. I felt that it was a narcissism.

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<sup>4</sup>In Hinz, ed., A Woman Speaks, p. 61.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.      <sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 64.

This "narcissistic" element recalls the "double" in the father-daughter relationship discussed in Chapter II.

For a brief analysis of the "double" or "twin" in the relationship between Anaïs and June as well as Lillian and Sabina, see Sharon Spencer, "The Dream of Twinship in the Writings of Anaïs Nin," The Journal of the Otto Rank Association IX, ii (Winter, 1974-1975): 81-90.

This "narcissism" is present in Nin's prose-poem called House of Incest (1936). The prose-poem has a dreamy quality to it, therefore it comes as no surprise that it grew out of Nin's dreams: "I kept a record of my dreams for a year... and then wrote a book called House of Incest, based on the idea that the first love was always within the family and was always, in an emotional sense, incestuous."<sup>8</sup> In her explanation of the title, Hinz says, "'house' is a metaphor for the body or psyche; 'incest' refers to the narcissistic nature of that psyche."<sup>9</sup>

To one unacquainted with surrealist writing, House of Incest seems labyrinthine in itself; undoubtedly there is a point in all the writing but that point seems obscured nonetheless. The meaning of the prose-poem becomes clear when one understands that the female narrator is involved in a search for her self, as witnessed by her question, "DOES ANYONE KNOW WHO I AM?"<sup>10</sup> There are two women in the first part of the story, each representing one facet of the individual nature. The narrator represents the intellect, the controlling force of rationality, what is traditionally considered to

For a continuation of this theme, see also Philip K. Jason, "Doubles/Don Juans: Anaïs Nin and Otto Rank," Mosaic: A Journal for the Comparative Study of Literature and Ideas XI, ii (Winter, 1978): 81-94.

<sup>8</sup>In Hinz, ed., A Woman Speaks, p. 126.

<sup>9</sup>Hinz, The Mirror And The Garden, p. 55.

<sup>10</sup>Anaïs Nin, House of Incest (Chicago: The Swallow Press, Inc., 1958), p. 26. All future references to this book will be quoted in the text of the essay; the title will be abbreviated to HI, and a page reference will follow.

be a male domain, whereas Sabina represents the emotions, particularly physical expression, the spontaneous force of instinct, even irrationality, an area traditionally associated with the female. Oliver Evans points out the sun-moon imagery in House of Incest:

The narrator is associated with the sun (a fertility symbol) and with warmth generally, while Sabina is associated with the moon--beautiful, but barren and cold--and is also described in a series of steel images, testimony at once of her coldness, her invulnerability, and her destructive power.<sup>11</sup>

The narrator and Sabina are eventually brought together in a physical sense as lovers; they act on the attraction the narrator senses for Sabina: "When I saw you, Sabina, I chose my body" (HI, 27). When Sabina gives a bracelet to the narrator, their devotion to one another ignites into passion:

Around my pulse she put a flat steel bracelet and my pulse beat as she willed, losing its human cadence, thumping like a savage in orgiastic frenzy. The lamentations of flutes, the double chant of wind through our slender bones, the cracking of our bones distantly remembered when on beds of down the worship we inspired turns to lust. (HI, 23)

However, it becomes apparent that the narrator and Sabina are not separate entities or individuals unto themselves, rather they are two aspects of the same personality.<sup>12</sup> This revelation comes from the narrator: "I AM THE OTHER FACE OF YOU...."

<sup>11</sup>Evans, p. 31.

<sup>12</sup>For a comparative analysis of Nin's book and one of Ingmar Bergman's films, see Nancy Scholar, "Anaïs Nin's House of Incest and Ingmar Bergman's Persona: Two Variations on a Theme," Literature/Film Quarterly VII, i (1979): 47-59.

For Nin's lecture at the UCLA Hommage to Bergman (12 October 1973), see Anaïs Nin, "Ingmar Bergman," A Casebook on Anaïs Nin, edited by Robert Zaller (New York: Meridian Books, 1974), pp. 111-116.

THIS IS THE BOOK YOU WROTE AND YOU ARE THE WOMAN I AM" (HI, 28). The narrator has lived a schizophrenic existence, in effect, and her yearning to unite both Sabina and herself into one personality forms the basis of her search for identity or her quest for wholeness:

The two currents do not meet. I see two women in me freakishly bound together, like circus twins. I see them tearing away from each other. I can hear the tearing, the anger and love, passion and pity. When the act of dislocation suddenly ceases--or when I cease to be aware of the sound--then the silence is more terrible because there is nothing but insanity around me, the insanity of things pulling, pulling within oneself, the roots tearing at each other to grow separately, the strain made to achieve unity. (HI, 30)

The effort expended by the narrator to achieve such a unity with Sabina, the other side of herself, becomes obsessive, even to the point where it could be called narcissism. What little wonder can there be that the narrator finds it impossible to love others when all the while she is absorbed in loving herself? "The narrator's problem is to recognize and to reconcile various inhabitants in the 'house,' and in doing so to transcend them, thus overcoming the narcissistic bond that prevents her from loving another."<sup>13</sup> The Modern Christ tells her, "If only we could all escape from this house of incest, where we only love ourselves in the other" (HI, 70). The house of incest from which we all must escape is the world of "self-absorption, self-love, neurotic obsession."<sup>14</sup> The narcissistic element of the narrator's falling

<sup>13</sup>Hinz, The Mirror And The Garden, p. 39.

<sup>14</sup>Spencer, Collage of Dreams, p. 56.

in love with Sabina, another aspect of herself, is evident; even if these women were separate individuals, their love would be no less narcissistic, for it would be the transference of emotion onto another person who is a mirror-image, basically an extension of oneself, in Nin's estimation. As Lillian Faderman explains,

The House of Incest, Nin says, is 'where we only love ourselves in the other,' and that is her explanation of lesbianism. The narrator observes that lesbian love means 'one lies down at peace as on one's own breast' (sic). To Sabina she says, 'From all men I was different and myself, but I see in you that part of me which is you,' and 'Our faces are soldered together by soft hair, soldered together, showing two profiles of the same soul.' There is no comfort in their similarities, despite her statement that sometimes the two women lie down at peace. More typically, the narrator declares, 'I will let you carry me into the fecundity of destruction... I become you. And you become me.' But she never suggests why the love of like beings, two women, should of itself be any more destructive than the love of different beings.<sup>15</sup>

Thus we can see that Nin's attitude towards lesbianism is delineated in the structure of House of Incest: the majority of the prose-poem centers on the adolescent or immature love of the narrator for another woman; the second part deals with the narrator's love for her brother which, although taboo in the sense that it is incestuous, nevertheless shifts to the "proper" gender orientation of the male as the love object.

Where does June Miller fit into House of Incest? In the Diary, Nin writes about a situation where she and June were in the bedroom, June modelling Anaïs's black cape which ac-

<sup>15</sup>Lillian Faderman, Surpassing The Love Of Men: Romantic Friendship And Love Between Women From The Renaissance To The Present (New York: William Morris and Company, Inc., 1981), p. 365.

centuates June's body: "I saw its fullness, its heaviness, and the richness of it overwhelmed me" (I, 30); in House of Incest, the memory of that black cape is recalled: "Her black cape hung like black hair from her shoulders, half-draped, half-floating around her body" (HI, 21). As a declaration of her love, Anaïs showers June with the handkerchief, earrings, and ring; June in turn presents Anaïs with a silver bracelet with a cat's eye stone. In House of Incest, Sabina gives the narrator a flat steel bracelet before their love turns into passion. The black cape and the bracelet can obviously be traced back to the Diary. To be sure, in the Diary, Nin fully admits to the connection between June and Sabina; she writes, "In House of Incest I wrote about June: 'She would tolerate no bars of light on open books'" (II, 311).

It should be noted that House of Incest tends to be subtle where the later novels are more specific in recalling the journal descriptions of June Miller. In this novel, though, there is always the suggestion of June in the character of Sabina; the reader is aware that there is a connection between the real and the created woman. Let us compare the Diary account of Anaïs's impressions on meeting June with the fictional passage which recalls it. First, the Diary:

Your beauty has drowned me, the core of me. You carry away with you a part of me reflected in you. When your beauty struck me, it dissolved me. Deep down, I am not different from you. I dreamed you, I wished for your existence. You are the woman I want to be. I see in you that part of me which is you. I feel compassion for your childish pride, for your trembling uncertainty, your dramatization of events, your enhancing of the loves given to you. (I, 21)

In House of Incest, we find the section which grew out of the

Diary excerpt:

6 Your beauty drowns me, drowns the core of me. When your beauty burns me I dissolve as I never dissolved before man. From all men I was different, and myself, but I see in you that part of me which is you. I feel you in me; I feel my own voice becoming heavier, as if I were drinking you in, every delicate thread of resemblance being soldered by fire and no one longer detects the fissure. (HI, 25-26)

To be sure, House of Incest provides the groundwork for our study in this chapter. Nin's initial novel not only acquaints us with the connection between much of what is written about June Miller in the Diary and the character of Sabina in the fiction, it presents Nin's basic understanding of lesbianism as the mirror-theory where one immaturely loves oneself in another person. As Nin says,

If there is an explanation to the mystery, it is this: the love between women is a refuge and an escape into harmony and narcissism in place of conflict. In the love between man and woman there is resistance and conflict. Two women do not judge each other. They form an alliance. It is, in a way, self-love. I love June because she is the woman I would like to be. (I, 41)

We will now explore the mirror-theory of lesbianism further in our discussion of Cities of the Interior, and, in particular, the way Nin uses June Miller as the model for Sabina.

Indeed, Sabina does not appear in Ladders to Fire until the last third of the novel, although her presence dominates the central action from the time that Jay introduces her to Lillian. The scene evokes the meeting of June and Anaïs:

As she walked heavily towards Lillian from the darkness of the hallway into the light of the door Lillian saw for the first time the woman she had always wanted to know. She saw Sabina's eyes burning, heard her voice so rusty and immediately felt drowned in her beauty. She wanted to say: I recognize you. I have often imagined a woman like you. (LF, 109)



Not only does Lillian/Anaïs have the same reaction to Sabina/June, but the characters of Sabina and June are coincidental. What Henry Miller says about June he could just as easily say about Sabina: "She demands illusion as other women demand jewels" (I, 18). An example of June's need for illusion is found in the Diary:

June was full of stories. She told [Henry] several versions about her childhood, birthplace, parents, racial origins. Her first version was that her mother was a Roumanian gypsy, that she sang in cafés and told fortunes. Her father, she said, played the guitar. When they came to America, they opened a night club, mostly for Roumanians. It was a continuation of their life in Roumania. But when Henry asked her what did she do in that environment, did she sing, did she tell fortunes, did she learn to dance, did she wear long braids and white blouses, she did not answer. Henry wanted to know where she had learned the beautiful English she spoke, like English spoken on the stage by English actors. He took her to a Roumanian restaurant and waited for her response to the music, the dances, the songs, to the swarthy men whose glances were like dagger thrusts. But June had forgotten this story by then and looked on the scene with detachment. When Henry pressed her for the truth, she began another story. She told him that she was born on the road, that her parents were show people, that they travelled all the time, that her father was a magician in a circus, her mother a trapezist. (I, 12-13)

June's need to create illusion in the face of Henry's need to focus on reality is reflected in Sabina's need to create a similar world of illusion to keep Lillian and Jay at a safe distance:

A broken dream, with spaces, reversals, contradictions, galloping fantasies and sudden retractions. She would say: 'he lifted my skirt,' or 'we had to take care of the wounds,' or 'the policeman was waiting for me and I had to swallow the drug to save my friends,' and then as if she had written this on a blackboard she took a huge sponge and effaced it all by a phrase which was meant to convey that perhaps this story had happened to someone else, or she may have read it, or heard it at a bar, and as soon as this was erased she began

another story of a beautiful girl who was employed in a night club and whom Sabina had insulted, but if Jay asked why she shifted the scene, she at once effaced it, cancelled it, to tell about something she she had heard and not seen at the night club at which she worked. (LF, 109-110)

Since Lillian is sympathetic and understanding towards Sabina, and her need of illusions, the two are bound to become allies; with Jay and Sabina, however, the battle lines are immediately drawn.

Just as the relationship between June and Henry Miller is filled with tension, so the relationship between Sabina and Jay is infused with hatred. In the Diary, Nin records her impressions of June and Henry: "He takes all he wants, but he reviles her for doing the same" (I, 28). This statement appears in an expanded form in Ladders to Fire:

From the very first Jay hated her, hated her as Don Juan hated Don Juana, as the free man hates the free woman, as man hates in woman this freedom in passion which he grants solely to himself. Hated her because he knew instinctively that she regarded him as he regarded woman: as a possible or impossible lover. (LF, 111)

The lack of harmony is intensified by the way each man renders the woman in his art. Henry presents a hateful portrait of June in his writing; to Anaïs, June confides, "I loved and trusted Henry until he betrayed me. He not only betrayed me with other women, but he distorted my personality. He created a cruel me which is not me" (I, 133). Similarly, Jay presents a hateful portrait of Sabina in his painting; to Lillian, Sabina confides, "He painted me as a whore. And you know that isn't me. He has such interest in evil that I told him stories... I hate him" (LF, 114). Thus the tension between Henry and June is transplanted into Ladders to Fire as

the hatred between Jay and Sabina. With Jay as her enemy, Sabina turns to Lillian for the comfort of friendship. Of their budding relationship, we read: "Lillian's glance which usually remained fixed upon Jay, grazing lightly over others, for the first time absorbed another human being as intently" (I, 113).

Aware of the possibility of creating a friendship, the two women agree to meet for lunch. Of interest to this study is the waiting of one woman for the other's eventual arrival, for the scene occurs in both the Diary and the fiction. First, the Diary:

I could not imagine her advancing out of the crowd in full daylight and I thought, could it be possible? I was afraid that such a mirage could not be. I was afraid that I would stand there exactly as I had stood in other places, watching a crowd and knowing no June would ever appear, because June was a product of my imagination. As people came into the place, I shivered at their ugliness, at their drabness, their likeness to each other in my eyes. Waiting for June was the most painful expectancy, like awaiting a miracle. I could hardly believe she would arrive by those streets, cross such a boulevard, emerge out of a handful of dark, faceless people, walk into that place. What a profound joy to watch the crowd scurrying and then to see her striding, resplendent, incredible, towards me. (I, 26-27)

The scene is nearly copied in Ladders to Fire:

Lillian waited at the corner of the Rue Auber. She would see Sabina in full daylight advancing out of a crowd. She would make certain that such an image could materialize, that Sabina was not a mirage which would melt in the daylight.

She was secretly afraid that she might stand there at the corner of the Rue Auber exactly as she had stood in other places watching the crowd, knowing no figure would come out of it which would resemble the figures in her dreams. Waiting for Sabina she experienced the most painful expectancy: she could not believe Sabina would arrive by these streets, cross such a boulevard, emerge from a mass of faceless people. What a profound joy to see her striding forward, wearing her shabby sandals and her shabby black dress with royal indifference. (LF, 113)

There are verbal exchanges between Anaïs and June that appear almost verbatim in the finalized version of Ladders to Fire. Here are some examples: June tells Anaïs, "It's a good thing that I'm going away. You would soon be disillusioned. You would unmask me" (I, 24); Sabina tells Lillian, "It's a good thing I'm going away. You would soon unmask me" (LF, 114). Further on, June says, "There are so many things I would love to do with you. With you I would take drugs" (I, 33); likewise, Sabina says, "There are so many things I would love to do with you, Lillian. With you I would take drugs. I would not be afraid" (I, 114). However, the similarity between the Diary and the fiction encompasses more than the mere echoing and re-echoing of lines; there is also the familiar image which Nin employs to describe Lillian's perception of Sabina: "Sabina's face appeared to Lillian as that of a child drowning behind a window" (LF, 115). Even the essence of the description of June and Anaïs walking down the street together is transplanted into the fiction:

They walked down the streets aimlessly, unconscious of their surroundings, arm in arm with a joy that was rising every moment, and with every word they uttered. A swelling joy that mounted with each step they took together and with the occasional brushing of their hips as they walked.

The traffic eddied around them but everything else, houses and trees were lost in a fog. Only their voices distinct, carrying such phrases as they could utter out of their female labyrinth of oblique perceptions.

...Bodies close, arm in arm, hands locked together over her breast. She had taken Lillian's hand and held it over her breast as if to warm it.

The city had fallen away. They were walking into a world of their own for which neither could find a name.

They entered a softly-lighted place, mauve and diffuse, which enveloped them in velvet closeness. (LF, 117)

When Sabina gives Lillian her silver bracelet, Lillian

says, "It's like having your warm hand around my wrist. It's still warm, like your own hand. I'm your prisoner, Sabina" (LF, 118). This recalls the passage in the Diary where June gives Anaïs a bracelet [see page 86]. As Sabina/June grows closer to Lillian/Anaïs, they mock Jay/Henry, now the outsider in the former triangle. Nin writes, "[June] wanted to defy the world, insult society, because Henry had given himself to a book, turned away from both of us" (I, 145). In Ladders to Fire, Lillian says, "He was glad we were going out together, he said it would give him a chance to work. He hasn't any idea of time--he doesn't even know what day of the week it is. He doesn't give a damn about anybody or anything" (LF, 119).

Resolved that "we hate Jay tonight. We hate man," (LF, 119), Sabina and Lillian become aware of "the craving for caresses. Wanting and fighting the want. Both frightened by the vagueness of their desire, the indefiniteness of their craving" (LF, 119). This corresponds with Nin's writing in the Diary: "I was trembling. I was aware of the vagueness of our feelings and desires. She talked ramblingly, but now I knew she was talking to cover a deeper talk, talking against the things we could not express" (I, 31). At this point there comes a long passage in which Nin describes Sabina and Lillian's behaviour while dancing together in a cheap night club; it is a distillation of the reality of June and Anaïs dancing together. First, the Diary:

Tonight it is June who says, 'I want to dance with you.' It is June who leads me, she heavy and I light and willowy. We glide on the last beat of a jazz piece which is descending and gasping and dying. The men, in

stiff evening shirts, stiffen even more in their chairs. The women close their lips tightly. The musicians smile, benign and malicious, rejoicing in the spectacle, which has the effect of a slap in the face of the pompous diners. They cannot help exclaiming that we are beautiful together. June dark, secret under the brim of her Greta Garbo felt hat, heavy-caped, tragic and pale, and I a contrast to her in every way. The musicians grin. The men feel insulted. At the table a waiter is waiting to tell us, we cannot dance again. (I, 145-146)

In Ladders to Fire, the scene is expanded:

They danced together, the floor turning under them like a phonograph record. Sabina dark and potent, leading Lillian.

A gust of jeers seemed to blow through the place. A gust of jeers. But they danced, cheeks touching, their cheeks chalice white. They danced and the jeers cut into the haze of their dizziness like a whip. The eyes of the men were insulting them. The eyes of men called them by the name the world had for them. Eyes. Green, jealous. Eyes of the world. Eyes sick with hatred and contempt. Caressing eyes, participating. Eyes ransacking their conscience. Stricken yellow eyes of envy caught in the flare of a match. Heavy torpid eyes without courage, without dreams. Mockery, frozen mockery from the frozen glass eyes of the loveless.

...Now they danced mockingly, defiantly, as if they were sliding beyond the reach of man's hands, running like sand between their insults. They scoffed at those eyes which brimmed with knowledge for they knew the ecstasy of mystery and fog, fire and orange fumes of a world they had seen through a slit in the dream. Spinning and reeling and falling, spinning and turning and rolling down the brume and smoke of a world seen through a slit in the dream.

The waiter put his ham-colored hand on Sabina's bare arm: 'You've got to get out of here, you two!' (LF, 121-122)

After this scene, Sabina and Lillian retire to a hotel room and make love. This act has no counterpart in Nin's lived experience<sup>16</sup> if we are to believe her claim that she and

<sup>16</sup>We may note that the public reaction to Ladders to Fire was cold and critical. A friend tells Nin, "You should lie low after all this exposure of one woman loving another;" Nin protests in her Diary: "The relationship I describe is not even Lesbian" (III, 63). She later amends her statement: "...the mere fact that I implied woman's love for a woman damned me" (III, 176). When Ladders to Fire appeared with photographs of Nin posing as the various female characters, the humorous in-

June never consummated their desire for one another. Yet the consummation of passion leaves both fictional women unfulfilled. Again, Nin returns to her mirror-theory of lesbianism:

Lillian wanted to reach out to her, into these violent shadows. She saw that Sabina wanted to be she as much as she wanted to be Sabina. They both wanted to exchange bodies, exchange faces. There was in both of them the dark strain of wanting to become the other, to deny what they were, to transcend their actual selves. Sabina desiring Lillian's newness, and Lillian desiring Sabina's deeply marked body. (LF, 124)

Sabina and Lillian nevertheless find that their lovemaking is insufficient to help them become one another:

Their bodies touched and then fell away, as if both of them had touched a mirror, their own image upon a mirror. They had felt the cold wall, they had felt the mirror that never appeared when they were taken by man. Sabina had merely touched her own youth, and Lillian her free passions. (LF, 125)

The intimacy between the two women is shattered when Lillian is possessed with jealousy. She tells Sabina, "It's Jay you love, not me" (LF, 126). Lillian's fears that another woman will take Jay from her, and that Sabina may well be the one to do it: "Would the body of Sabina triumph over her greater love?" (LF, 127). Lillian even longs for the death of her rival: "If only Sabina would die...." (LF, 129). Sabina's pleas only fall on the deaf ears of Lillian:

Lillian, Lillian, if you arouse hatred between us, you break a magic alliance! He is not as aware of us as we are of each other. We have loved in each other all he has failed to see. Must we awake to the great destructiveness of rivalry, of war, when this night contained all that slipped between his fingers! (LF, 126)

tention backfires: "The one of me acting out Lillian was misunderstood, and gave rise to the legend that I was a Lesbian. If I had ever enjoyed relationships with women I would not have minded at all. But as that was an unfulfilled part of my life, I felt the irony" (III, 175-176)

The women were in league against Jay, but now they are pitted against one another as rivals.

When Sabina next appears towards the conclusion of Children of the Albatross, Nin again emphasizes her need to exist in a world of illusion: "She hated factual questions as to her activities. Above all she hated to be registered in any of the official books. She hated to give her birth hour, her genealogy, and all her dealings with passport authorities were blurred and complicated" (CA, 123). Sabina's greatest fear is "being discovered" (CA, 125), being understood by someone else. To avoid penetration of the mystery, Sabina retreats to the world of shadows and darkness: "She could not bear the light of common, everyday simplicities! As other women blink at sunlight, she blinked at the light of common everyday simplicities" (CA, 125). This recalls Sabina's statement in Ladders to Fire: "I hate daylight" (LF, 113); the line may even be traced back to the Diary where Henry says of June, "She hates daylight" (I, 17).

Indeed, a woman who seeks refuge in a world of illusions is not the type to tolerate the glare of reality. Like June, Sabina certainly resides in a world of make-believe. In order to prevent a man from mistaking her to be an ordinary human being, Sabina allows him to "build an image" which she will then attempt to fulfill: "She wanted desperately to answer man's most impossible wishes" (CA, 124). It is impossible to know who Sabina is beneath all the charades and masks; Nin feels the same way about June when confronted by her: "She is an actress every moment. I cannot grasp the



core of June" (I, 20).

It is intriguing to note that, when Lillian decides to run away from her relationship with Jay, "her first instinctive, blind gesture of escape was to don the black cape copied from Sabina's at the time of their relationship (CA, 138). Lillian seeks out Edgar for a quick sexual encounter only to discover that "she was not free, she was being Sabina, with the kind of man Sabina would have chosen" (I, 140). The crowning touch comes in Lillian's departure from Edgar: "When the stranger asked her for her name she did not say Lillian but Sabina" (CA, 141). The apparent yearning of Lillian and Sabina to become one another will be touched on once again in the last volume of Cities of the Interior.

Like Jay's brief appearance in The Four-Chambered Heart, Sabina, too, is a secondary character to the main action. Sabina's features are recounted by Djuna: the "heavy and straight" hair, the "incandescent gold" skin, the "strong peasant" hands, and, particularly, her "semetic labyrinthian mind" (FCH, 161). The labyrinth is an image of which Nin is quite enamoured; she employs it in her description of both Sabina and June. In the Diary, she writes:

Certain cities of the Orient were designed to baffle the enemy by a tangle of intricate streets. For those concealed within the labyrinth, its detours were a measure of safety; for the invader, it presented an image of fearful mystery.

June must have chosen the labyrinth for safety.  
(I, 14)

Indeed, the labyrinth is a perfect image to depict June and Sabina's desire to envelope themselves in a cloak of mystery.

Sabina is not only labyrinthine, she is an Amazon in her own right; Nin refers to Sabina's posture on a chair; "her strong thighs rocked the chair like an Amazon's wooden horse" (FCH, 167). Rango and Sabina become adversaries, both jealous of the time that the other spends in Djuna's company. It is an even match of equally strong opponents; one evening she and Rango engage in a contest to see who can eat the most red chillies. "Both might have died of the contest, for neither one would yield. Each little red chili like a concentrate of fire which burned them both" (FCH, 162). The marathon is ended when the restaurant closes; otherwise the two might have died before one would surrender to the other. Sabina is that sort of a willful person.

It is Sabina who becomes the central character of A Spy In The House Of Love. Nin uses the identical description to depict Sabina's inner frenzy:

She could not sit still. She talked profusely and continuously with a feverish breathlessness like one in fear of silence. She sat as if she could not bear to sit for long; and, when she rose to buy cigarettes, she was equally eager to return to her seat. Impatient, alert, watchful, as if in dread of being attacked, restless and keen, she drank hurriedly.... (SHL, 7; see also LF, 109)

To be sure, there are not only repetitions between the Diary and the fiction, there are repetitions between the novels which comprise the major work, Cities of the Interior\*. Many of the aforementioned descriptions of Sabina in Ladders to Fire reappear in A Spy In The House Of Love; one may lay the novels side by side to perceive the astonishing similarity. Perhaps it is easier to employ past descriptions than to invent new ones; perhaps, in fairness to Nin, the repeated pas-

sages are meant to heighten the reader's awareness of the link between all five volumes of Cities of the Interior. In any case, the lack of space forces us to consider only the new material in Spy which can be related back to the Diary account of June Miller.

There are similarities between the portrait of June and the one of Sabina, but there is also proof that Nin has begun to make use of various characteristics to produce a composite character in Sabina. Early on in the novel, we find:

[Sabina] was now in Morocco visiting the baths with the native women, sharing their pumice stone, and learning from the prostitutes how to paint her eyes with kohl from the market place. 'It's coal dust, and you place it right inside the eyes. It smarts at first, and you want to cry; but that spreads it out on the eyelids, and that is how they get that shiny, coal black rim around the eyes.' (SHL, 4)

Readers of Diary II will remember Nin's trip to Fez, Morocco where Nin joined the Arab women taking their baths and washing with soap and a pumice stone [see II, 77-79]. In this circumstance, it may be said that Sabina is a composite<sup>17</sup> of both June Miller's and Anaïs Nin's lived experience.

The essence of June Miller is preserved in the novel. Although married to Henry, and possibly having an affair with a masculine girl named Jean, who lives with the Millers, June nevertheless flirts with enticing men as though she must involve herself with the whole world rather than one person alone. Likewise, A Spy In The House Of Love details Sabina's many involvements with Alan, her husband; Philip, a singer;

<sup>17</sup>It may also be said that Nin projects her own attitudes onto her characters: Sabina's fear of the exposure of her true self is related or at least similar to Nin's fear of saying too much in the Diary.

Mambo, a night club owner; John, a grounded aviator; and perhaps Donald, a young man.<sup>18</sup> Forever the illusionist, Sabina invents a story of being an actress out on the road with a play when all the while she is in a hotel room with a lover.

The inventress is still madly in love with the world of shadows, especially moon light. Indeed, Sabina takes moon-baths:

At sixteen Sabina took moon-baths, first of all because everyone else took sun-baths, and second, she admitted, because she had been told it was dangerous. The effect of moon-baths was unknown, but it was intimated that it might be the opposite of the sun's effect.

The first time she exposed herself she was frightened. What would the consequences be? There were many taboos against gazing at the moon, many old legends about the evil effects of falling asleep in moonlight. She knew that the insane found the full moon acutely disturbing, that some of them regressed to animal habits of howling at the moon. She knew that in astrology the moon ruled the night life of the unconscious, invisible to consciousness.

But then she had always preferred the night to the day. (SHL, 33)

This, too, is June's world of "shadings, gradations, nuances, and subtleties" (I, 46). We cannot say for certain whether June took moon-baths (there is nothing in the Diary that suggests she did), but it is clear that a person like June, when fictionalized, could believably take moon-baths.

The novel recounts Sabina's various sexual exploits, particularly her major concern that none of her lovers should know of the existence of the others. Sabina thinks of her-

<sup>18</sup>For a useful article comparing the adulterous heroine, the question of the nature of love and marriage, and the problem of individual integrity in Hawthorne and Nin, see Anna Balakian, "'...and the pursuit of happiness': The Scarlet Letter and A Spy In The House Of Love," Mosaic: A Journal for the Comparative Study of Literature and Ideas XI, ii (Winter, 1978): 163-170.

self as being involved in "lies that seemed to her like the most intricate art of protectiveness instead of the greatest treachery" (SHL, 57). She goes to movies with a lover and fears her husband or yet another lover might discover her presence; it becomes her habit to retreat to the women's room before the film starts so that she can walk back down the dark aisle to survey the crowd for a glimpse of one of her other lovers. Spy films only increase her fear of detection:

It was when she saw the lives of spies that she realized fully the tension with which she lived every moment, equal to theirs. The fear of committing themselves, of sleeping too soundly, of talking in their sleep, of carelessness of accent or behaviour, the need for continuous pretending, quick improvisations of motivations, quick justifications of their presence here or there.

It seemed to Sabina that she could have offered her services or been of great value in that profession.

I am an international spy in the house of love.  
(SHL, 58)

Here Sharon Spencer comments,

Sabina, who seems to have many selves, is also self-less because she is too frightened to live from the deep core of center of her self. She gives nothing; consequently, she is the least 'feminine' though the most sexual of Anaïs Nin's women characters. This is why she is an imposter, a 'spy' in the house of love."<sup>19</sup>

Towards the end of the novel, Sabina makes a confession about herself to a character called "the Lie Detector. Her confession becomes an attempt to explain the necessity for her endless role-playing and her love of illusions and mystery which stems back to her childhood.

What I corrupted was what is called the truth in favor of a more marvellous world. I could always improve on the facts.... in self-defense, I accuse the writers of fairytales. Not hunger, not cruelty, not my parents, but these tales which promised that sleeping in the snow nev-

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<sup>19</sup>Spencer, Collage of Dreams, p. 85.

er caused pneumonia, that bread never turned stale, that trees blossomed out of season, that dragons could be killed with courage, that intense wishing would be followed immediately by fulfillment of the wish. Intrepid wishing, said the fairytales, was more effective than labor. The smoke issuing from Aladdin's lamp was my first smoke-screen, and the lies learned from fairytales were my first perjuries. Let us say that I had perverted tendencies; I believed everything I read. (SHL, 112)

The Lie Detector tells Sabina, "You have to set yourself free" and that "You've only been trying to love, beginning to love" (SHL, 115). Still, despite this revelation, Sabina remains "crippled" as "indicated by the unresolved ending of the novel in which [she is] the protagonist.... [Sabina is] too self-pitying and too prone to flee from rather than seduce the minotaur."<sup>20</sup> To this, Sharon Spencer adds, "Sabina has no center; otherwise her personality would not fall apart as it does at the novel's end."<sup>21</sup> Nevertheless, Franklin and Schneider optimistically suggest, "[Sabina] finally possesses the facts of her situation, and one may hope that after having gone through the lengthy nightmare she will awaken a mature and loving woman."<sup>22</sup>

To be sure, Sabina's fate is not resolved in A Spy In The House Of Love; we are left with the portrait of a woman infused "with restlessness, the desire to become attached and yet to remain free. The need to change without losing one's identity."<sup>23</sup> Certainly June Miller is very much like Sabina

<sup>20</sup>Hinz, The Mirror And The Garden, p. 41.

<sup>21</sup>Spencer, Collage of Dreams, p. 85.

<sup>22</sup>Benjamin Franklin V and Duane Schneider, Anaïs Nin: An Introduction (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1979), p. 128.

<sup>23</sup>Hinz, The Mirror And The Garden, p. 60.

in the respect that she, too, is a restless creature who longs to remain with Henry but just as strongly yearns to be free. She ultimately decides that she and Henry are a mismatched pair and it is better that she leave him. In December 1934, June does leave Henry, but not before she robs him of the money Anaïs gave him to get to London; Nin writes, "June is leaving a parting impression which is not beautiful. Emptying Henry's wallet, frightening Henry" (I, 157). Of Sabina, Evelyn J. Hinz says, "Restlessness and feverishness are the passions she personifies; evasion and flight are her characteristic activities. In short, she is the modern choleric character."<sup>24</sup> Hinz could say the same thing about June Miller.

Again, at the end of Seduction of the Minotaur, Nin brings her major characters together. She refers to Sabina's "chaotic and irresistible flow [which] swept Lillian along into what seemed like a passion" (SM, 125). With the help of Djuna, her friend, Lillian comes to comprehend "the real nature of the relationship":

It was a desire for an impossible union: she wanted to lose herself in Sabina and BECOME Sabina. This wanting to BE Sabina she had mistaken for love of Sabina's night beauty. She wanted to lie beside her and become her and be one with her and both arise as ONE woman; she wanted to add herself to Sabina, re-enforce the woman in herself, the submerged woman, intensify this woman Lillian she could not liberate fully. She wanted to merge with Sabina's freedom, her capacity for impulsive action, her indifference to consequences. She wanted to smooth her rebellious hair with Sabina's clinging hair, smooth her own denser skin by the touch of Sabina's silkier one, set her own blue eyes on fire from Sabina's fawn eyes, drink Sabina's voice in place of her own, and, disguised as Sabina, out of her own body for good, to become one of the women so loved by her father.

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<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 64.

She had loved in Sabina an unborn Lillian. By adding herself to Sabina she would become a more potent woman. In the presence of Sabina she existed more vividly. She chose a body she could love (being critical of her own) a freedom she could obey (which she could never possess) a face she could worship (not being pleased with her own). She believed love quite capable of such metamorphosis. (SM, 125-126)

This passage evokes Nin's belief in the mirror-theory approach to lesbianism: "They kissed once. It was soft and lovely, but like touching your own flesh" (SM, 127). That Nin tends to think of love between women as immature is particularly evident after Sabina and Lillian kiss: "They both realize the comedy of their pretences. Something so absurd... in their arrogance about playing Jay's role. They could not escape their femininity, their woman's role, no matter how difficult or complex" (SM, 127). Further on, Lillian reaffirms her alliance with Jay and shuns Sabina: "Sabina would have thrust me back into being a half woman" (SM, 129). In Nin's estimation, then, it would have been a mistake for Lillian to become Sabina's lover. Ironically, Nin is filled with a lifetime of regrets that she did not become June Miller's lover.

In Diary VI, Nin reveals an interesting detail in regard to her relationship with June Miller: "My attraction to June was an un-lived experience, so in imagination, in fiction, I completed it" (VI, 59). Never is the completion of the sexual experience so obvious as it is in Nin's two volumes of erotica, Delta of Venus (1977)<sup>25</sup> and Little Birds (1979).<sup>26</sup>

<sup>25</sup>Anaïs Nin, Delta of Venus: Erotica (New York: Bantam Books, 1979).

<sup>26</sup>Anaïs Nin, Little Birds: Erotica (New York: Bantam Books, 1979). All future references to this book will be cited in the



During the 1940's, Nin, Henry Miller, and a few friends wrote erotica for a collector who paid a dollar a page for the writing, and helped Nin to find a way to make ends meet. Although the majority of the stories deal with heterosexual relations of all sorts and in a variety of numbers, some stories deal with love between women.<sup>27</sup> Perhaps the best example of a story which involves lesbian love is "Mandra" in Little Birds. Mandra, the lesbian narrator, tells the story of Mary, a 34-year-old woman who has never had an orgasm, neither with her husband nor her women lovers. Mandra's attraction to Mary soon results in Mandra's gentle seduction:

I kiss her clitoris, still wet from the bath; her pubic hair, still damp as seaweed. Her sex tastes like a seashell, a wonderful, fresh, salty seashell. Oh, Mary! My fingers work more quickly, she falls back on the bed, offering her whole sex to me, open and moist, like a camellia, like rose petals, like velvet, satin. It is rosy and new, as if no one had ever touched it. It is like the sex of a young girl.

Her legs hang over the side of the bed. Her sex is open; I can bite into it, kiss it, insert my tongue. She does not move. The little clitoris stiffens like a nipple. My head between her two legs is caught in the most delicious vise of silky, salty flesh. (LB, 143)

Mandra's skill at lovemaking helps Mary to achieve her elusive

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text of the essay; the title will be abbreviated to LB, and a page reference will follow.

<sup>27</sup>For a study of eroticism that mentions Violette Leduc's La Bâtarde, D. H. Lawrence's works, especially Lady Chatterly's Lover, and even Marlon Brando in Last Tango in Paris, see Anaïs Nin, "Eroticism In Women," Playgirl (April, 1974). Reprinted in Anaïs Nin, In Favor of the Sensitive Man and Other Essays (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976), pp. 3-11.

Conversely, one may consider eroticism in men in Anaïs Nin, "In Favor of the Sensitive Man," Playgirl (September, 1974). Reprinted in Anaïs Nin, In Favor of the Sensitive Man and Other Essays (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976), pp. 46-54.

orgasm. A panting Mary moans, "Oh, Mandra, what have you done to me...." (LB, 144). As Nin provides no description in the Diary of sexual expression shared with June Miller, apart from passionate kisses and the fondling of breasts, we must take this writing as an example of Nin's imaginative ability in her fiction.

Once more, the trend in Nin's writing reasserts itself: in the earlier volumes of Cities of the Interior, there are many passages from the novels which can be traced back to specific lines, even specific paragraphs of the Diary. However, as time allows Nin the proper distance to extricate herself from her own experience, her fiction breaks away from its former dependency on the Diary to become fiction in its own right, or fiction that finally involves the use of the author's imagination. In her later novels, like A Spy In The House of Love or Seduction of the Minotaur, Nin is still able to evoke the presence of June Miller in her writing, but even readers of the Diary cannot deny that a change in the writer has taken place.

By the time Nin writes Seduction of the Minotaur and especially Collages, her last novel, she clearly has freed herself from her tremendous dependency on her Diary account of June Miller as her source for what she writes about Sabina; indeed, the character of Sabina does not even appear in Collages. The presence of June is still felt in Seduction of the Minotaur, but it is the essence and not the reality of June that forms the character of Sabina. It would appear that Nin

has finally distinguished the difference between real-life characters and fictive characters, and she has come to acknowledge that the craft of writing involves more than the seizure of people one knows in real life to transplant into one's writing. Ironically, once Nin finally learns--or seems to learn--the distinction between watered-down biography and fiction, she ends her career as a novelist to devote her sole time to publishing the Diary and touring the States to lecture and otherwise promote herself.

## CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION

In The Novel of the Future, Nin discusses the craft of writing with specific references to her Diary and her fictional works. She freely admits that a direct connection links the characters of the Diary with the characters of the fiction:

A character in the novel is always someone I have known and recorded in the diary. But the art of fiction makes composites, expands, extends, alters such a character. In the diary where I follow the development, growth, and ultimate climax, the life of a character develops more slowly in time. When I start a novel, I do not know yet what such and such a character has become. In the diary it takes ten, twenty, thirty years to follow the life of Henry Miller. In fiction, time is accelerated. So a new concept of time takes over, and it becomes a different story.

Granted, time in a novel and time in real life are two different concepts, for the first may indeed be accelerated at the whim of the author whereas the second may need as long as thirty years, even longer, to be realized. But Nin does not need to know the entire life story of Henry Miller to create a character in her continuous novel, Cities of the Interior, who is based on Miller but named Jay. Henry Miller and the story of Jay are indeed similar stories; as Nin concedes, the fictional character stems from an original portrait conceived in the Diary:

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<sup>1</sup>Nin, The Novel of the Future, p. 108.

...in fiction I began with characters I knew well, intimately, knew in depth. They retained a psychological authenticity even though by the necessities of fiction they became composites (either to protect them from identification or because a theme sometimes necessitates emphasis, expansion, a stretching of facts, a more cumulative impact, and leads one into variations, ramifications, away from the facts). All my stories are based on reality.

Nin would like to have her readers believe that her stories are simply "based" on reality, and that her characters are "composites," and yet this study has proven that the characters are copied from reality more than Nin would have us believe, and that the characters are not as composite as she states. To be sure, any author inevitably uses her own realm of experience to develop a fictional world. But ideally, of course, the art of fiction (as distinct from the art of autobiography disguised as fiction) does indeed expand, extend, and alter a character. This Nin seldom does, at least until her later fiction.

In a chapter entitled, "Genesis of the Diary," Nin states, "...the psychological reality of each character had been taken first from a living heart. Whether or not the transplant was successful, I leave to the critics."<sup>3</sup> It is revealing that Nin herself uses the word "transplant" to describe the transition from the Diary portrait of a character to the fictional portrait; "transplant" and not "transform" is the word to describe the process. Yet Nin is being too protective of her own writing method when she claims that the "transplant" involved only "the psychological reality." Nin plagiarizes this and more from her father and the Millers.

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 45.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 145-146.

Far too many personal details of the lives of these three individuals are shared by the fictional characters for Nin to claim that her characters are simply "based" on reality.

In a self-serving statement, Nin laments, "It is a pity that to achieve an evaluation, the novels have to undergo dissection."<sup>4</sup> We must examine the parts of her novels in order to assess the success (or lack of success) of her entire fictional output. It is as though Nin herself admits her novels cannot tolerate close scrutiny. Nin begrudgingly acknowledges the critic's interest in the origins of the "composites":

No sooner has the novelist written a body of work than the biographers set to work unravelling all the fiction writer's composites.... It is a task of dissection, and of no greater use than unraveling a sweater. You have a ball of wool again, no sweater, no magic novel. I thought at least the diary would keep such activity accurate, for the novelist is at the mercy of inaccuracies. Very often at the mercy of snipers.<sup>5</sup>

Without a doubt, these words are designed to dissuade potential critics from an examination of the works of fiction too closely where characterization is concerned. Nin uses the clever image of unraveling a sweater to discover its origins, and yet the image is more clever than she fully realizes. Unraveling a sweater leaves a ball of wool; dissecting the composites leaves, in Nin's words, "no magic novel."

In her chapter, "Diary Versus Fiction," Nin gives another warning to discourage the critics from dissecting the "composite" portrait:

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 146.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

How much is lost by retranslating such composites and redistributing each trait where it belongs is exemplified in the biography of Proust by George D. Painter. By replacing all the 'types' into the classified box they sprang from, Painter destroyed a magical component.

Only an uncreative person would spend ten years on such reclassification of the alchemist's elements out of which Proust made a world of depth. [Emphasis mine.]

Further on, Nin claims that "...I do not think it is love of the novelist which drives critics to play sleuth to the personal lives and personal genesis of their art. It is merely the exercise of the art of sleuthing... [which] continues to be a favoured sport among the academicians."<sup>7</sup> Yet the relative unpopularity of Nin's writing and the classification of Anaïs Nin as a second, and perhaps even a third-rate writer hinges on the overlapping or the similarity of portraits in the Diary and the fiction. Most people familiar with Nin tend to read the Diary first and then often turn to the fiction. Once a reader has familiarized herself with the Diary, even if it is only Diary I, works of fiction like "Winter of Artifice" and Cities of the Interior pale in comparison, particularly when the fictional characters are so obviously patterned after the real-life portraits presented in the Diary.

We have not yet noted how the Diary in itself is closely related to fiction. Just as the art of fiction involves a process of selecting particular events and details, so the art of diary writing, too, requires a selection process. It is impossible to record everything that happens in a single day, as Nin writes:

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 157.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., pp. 157-158.

Put yourself right in the present. This was my principle when I wrote the diary--to write the thing I felt most strongly about that day. Start there and that starts the whole unravelling, because that has roots in the past and it has branches into the future. The main thing is that what you feel strongly about today is where you're at today, and that is what the purpose of the diary is. Otherwise you would write a memoir; I would be writing about my past now. The importance is now, taking it now, where you are now, how you feel today, what is the strongest feeling. I used to choose this way; that's why not everything is in the diary. I chose the event of the day that I felt most strongly about, the most vivid one, the warmest one, the nearest one, the strongest one. That was my method of selection. You can't do a whole day, and I certainly couldn't put down what I thought in a whole day. The importance is today. Because actually we think universes in one day. Then one day you may have a recollection. Occasionally in the diary something would come out of the past and I would pick it up. Or a dream may throw you back just as it may throw you forward.

In the Introduction to Diary I, Gunther Stuhlmann points out that the Diary is an edited version of a large manuscript diary kept by Nin. Sharon Spencer notes the full meaning of such editing:

In this edited form, then, the Diary is even closer to fiction than are the original notebooks. The result is a continuous account of a life, an account that cannot be assigned to a genre (as much modern writing cannot) but displays the qualities both of fiction--in its heightened intensity, overall magnification of its material and in its superb language--and of autobiography insofar as its contents are not invented but have been transcribed from life.

Here Benjamin Franklin V and Duane Schneider add:

The diarist gives to events a shape, a structure; and a coherence; the diarist, like the writer of fiction, imposes upon them a kind of unity and order that was not necessarily there to begin with. What we have, then, is perhaps something like a heightened reminiscence.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>8</sup>In Hinz, A Woman Speaks, pp. 163-164.

<sup>9</sup>Spencer, Collage of Dreams, p. 122.

<sup>10</sup>Franklin and Schneider, p. 175.



And further:

So the journal-letter, one might say, became a journal-novel. In each of the volumes, along with character development and something like a plot, one finds a main character, Nin herself, who is surrounded by minor characters who help to define her. She moves and progresses among these subordinate characters in a way<sup>11</sup> not unlike the hero or heroine in a picaresque novel.

Elements of Nin's Diary (resulting from the process of editing) cause it to resemble fiction; it is impossible to conclusively state whether Nin is indeed writing the "truth" in the Diary. Here I side with Franklin and Schneider: "To ask whether the Diary is fact or fiction is to miss the point."<sup>12</sup> The fact is that the Diary provides the record of a life and that the fiction is a result of the "lifting" or "transplanting" of material from that life.

The lack of space in this study has restricted me to the three characters I have discussed at length in previous chapters, and thus one of the best examples of Nin's art plagiarizing life has not yet been considered. Towards the end of Diary I comes the August, 1934 description of Nin's delivery of a stillborn child (I, 338-349). With only few cuts, the identical story appears as a short piece entitled "Birth" at the end of Under A Glass Bell And Other Stories (1948).<sup>13</sup> Franklin and Schneider point out the similarity of the Diary account describing the actual experience and the subsequent short story copied from that experience, when they ask:

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 176.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., 169.

<sup>13</sup>Anaïs Nin, Under a Glass Bell and Other Stories (Chicago: The Swallow Press, Inc., 1948).

What is the difference, then, between the fiction and the Diary? One finds that some of the short stories in Under A Glass Bell, for example, appear later in a published version of the Diary, presumably having been included first in the private diary before appearing in the volume of short stories. But the material is hardly altered: the same stories appear under the implicit guise of fiction and then later, again implicitly, as some kind of objective fact.<sup>14</sup> [Emphasis mine]

A comparison of the Diary birth account with the short story entitled "Birth" indeed provides one of the best examples of how the fiction is patterned after original material in the Diary.

As previously stated, a trend in Nin's writing becomes apparent when a chronological survey of the fiction is undertaken. From the comparison of the image of the father in the Diary and "Winter of Artifice," we see that Nin's dependency on the Diary as a notebook is very strong. The study of Henry and June Miller in the Diary and the fictional counterparts of Jay and Sabina in Cities of the Interior takes us through Nin's developmental stage as a writer. When Ladders to Fire is written in 1946, Nin still depends on the Diary to provide much of the characterization for the fiction; however, by the time Seduction of the Minotaur is written in 1961, Nin has learned to evoke the essence of June Miller in the character of Sabina rather than presenting a copy of June, as she does in the earlier novels.

Although Collages (1964) is not rooted in Nin's Diary account of her own life, as the other works of fiction are, it is still not a completely imaginative work. Indeed, the nu-

<sup>14</sup>Franklin and Schneider, p. 171.

merous characters in Collages are still patterned after people that Nin has known. Sharon Spencer tentatively concludes that "...in Collages, a woman named Judith Sands is most probably a representation of Djuna Barnes."<sup>15</sup> In a Diary VII discussion of character names, Nin admits as much herself: "Judith Sands is Djuna Barnes, writer, an invented name" and that "those who consented to have their real names used I left in. The others I changed" (VII, 57).

Among all the lengthy lists of public accolades and the joy of being famous, Diary VII contains a fascinating confession by Nin regarding the relationship between her Diary and her fiction: "All I knew was that the Diary could not be published, [and] that the characters I described might be fictionalized to make publication possible" (VII, 152). As early as the 1930's, Nin wanted to have her diary published but editors wanted to print only one edited volume, and Nin was not interested in such a slim format. It was not until 1966 that her dream was achieved with the publication of Diary I by Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. In the interim, Nin's fiction--which she admits is her only other vehicle to publish her Diary portraits--is printed (usually by her own press, since 127 publishers, for example, turned down A Spy In The House Of Love).<sup>16</sup> Indeed, Nin's interest is first and

<sup>15</sup>Sharon Spencer, Space, Time and Structure in the Modern Novel (New York: New York University Press, 1971), p. 54.

<sup>16</sup>Spencer, Collage of Dreams, p. 121.

foremost in the Diary rather than the fiction; during the 1940's to the mid-1960's, her novels are her only way to achieve her goal of being a published writer.

In a survey of the relationship of Nin's Diary to the fiction, one sees that her fiction abounds with characters like the father in "Winter of Artifice" or Jay and Sabina in Cities of the Interior, but the origin of these characters is derived from Nin's real-life associations with Joaquin Nin and Henry and June Miller. There is simply far too much material in the Diary which recurs in the fiction for us to pretend that the similarity between the two forms is sheer coincidence. Nin's absorption in herself and her life is so great that she can only recreate her life and times in a fictionalized form rather than invest her imaginative ability in a fictional world that transcends her own. In Diary VI, Nin chides the writer in herself: "Anais, begin a book. Write. Begin anywhere" (VI, 191). Then she makes a startling confession: "I am imprisoned in the diary. Wherever I begin it leads me back to characters already painted. I am submerged by the enormity of my material. I have been spontaneous, capricious for so long that I cannot construct" (VI, 191-192). Critics favourably predisposed towards Nin claim that the Diary and the fiction co-exist to complement one another. For Nin, the Diary and the fiction were at odds with one another; her fiction may have been ultimately born from the frustration of not getting the Diary published. As a distillation of her Diary (and oftentimes a copy), the fiction is a lesser creation.

Despite the shortcomings of an edited diary, it is still the Diary, rather than the fiction, which has preserved the name of Anaïs Nin. Whether or not she truly is the female counterpart to Samuel Pepys remains a matter of opinion, but it cannot be denied that her eight-volume Diary is a remarkable achievement of autobiography. In an interview before her death, Nin provides her own definitive statement regarding the Diary's popular success and the problems of the fiction:

...the fiction led me to a wall. It led me to a sort of troubled silence, and it could be that that influenced me. But it could also be that I realized I had put much more into the diaries. And, as I said before, there are imaginative elements in the diaries, too.... I was so disillusioned by the reception of the novels, it seemed like I had reached a dead-end. And then I suddenly began to think that maybe my major work was the diary. So now, of course, I'm involved in finishing Volume 7. When I do finish it, I plan to go through some of the childhood diaries; then, who knows? But I had the feeling that fiction, for me, was disastrous.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>Jeffrey Bailey, "Link in the Chain of Feeling: An Interview with Anaïs Nin," New Orleans Review V (1978): 118.

## APPENDIX I

Judging from the available number of "how-to" books regarding diary writing, there must be a flux of twentieth century diarists. Of these books, the best is by Tristine Rainer, The New Diary: How To Use A Journal For Self-Guidance And Expanded Creativity (Los Angeles: J. P. Tarcher, Inc., 1978). Rainer, who taught journal writing with Anaïs Nin at the International College in Los Angeles, provides a comprehensive outline of various techniques of using a diary, while always emphasizing the importance of the individual's choice of what does and doesn't work.

Also good is Christina Baldwin's One to One: Self-Understanding through Journal Writing (New York: M. Evans and Company, 1977). Baldwin, who conducts journal therapy seminars across the United States, tends to rely more on her own diary entries to illustrate her methods where Rainer uses the material from a vast cross-section of diarists.

A special method of diary keeping is presented in Ira Progoff's At A Journal Workshop: The Basic Text and Guide for Using the Intensive Journal (New York: Dialogue House Library, 1980).<sup>1</sup> Progoff, a psychotherapist and professor, has develop-

<sup>1</sup>For Nin's positive evaluation of Progoff's diary method, see Anaïs Nin, "Being A Guide To Recording Signs of Soul--A Review," Los Angeles Times Book Review (19 October 1975). Reprinted in The Journal of the Otto Rank Association XI, i (Summer, 1976): 42-46. Immediately following this article is a second informative piece comparing Nin and Progoff's methods of diary keeping; see Lea Schweitzer, "A Response to Anaïs Nin's Review of At A Journal Workshop," pp. 47-48.

ed a complex, highly-structured method of diary keeping which relies on a series of files with such sections as "Daily Log," "Dialogue Dimension," "Dream Log," "Twilight Imagery Log," "Inner Wisdom Dialogue," and so forth. Now in its tenth printing, the Intensive Journal method obviously is popular; however, many diarists may not wish to conform to such a rigid schedule of writing.

Yet diaries need not always emphasize writing. Lucia Capacchione, The Creative Journal: The Art of Finding Yourself (Chicago: The Swallow Press, 1979), presents a series of exercises which combine writing and drawing as complementary forms of expression in keeping a diary. Capacchione, an art therapist, stresses creativity and spontaneity, quite unlike Progoff's method. There are other books available, but these are, judging from their presence in many bookstores, the most popular versions.

Perhaps the next best thing to studying these books is to explore the number of printed diaries. Especially useful for whetting the appetite is an anthology of women diarists entitled, Revelations: Diaries of Women, edited by Mary Jane Moffat and Charlotte Painter (New York: Vintage Books, 1974). Excerpts from the diaries of such writers as Louisa May Alcott, Marie Bashkirtseff, Anne Frank, Alice James, Katherine Mansfield, George Sand, and Dorothy Wordsworth, may be further explored in the separate volumes of their published work.

In her list of diary resources at the end of her book, Christina Baldwin provides the following information:

According to James Cummings, antiquarian book dealer and collector, there are about 9,000 journals and diaries in print. He should know, for he probably has the most thorough annotated collection in the country--about 7,800 volumes. This collection resides with him in a special room of his Victorian house in Stillwater, Minnesota.<sup>2</sup>

For two weeks in August, 1980, I was fortunate enough to "journey into the wonder of that room of recorded lives,"<sup>3</sup> as Christina Baldwin puts it, when I visited James Cummings and perused the impressive room containing the diary collection. Of particular interest to any Nin scholar are the autographed first editions of Nin's published Diary. It is, in my opinion, the best place in North America to conduct diary research.

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<sup>2</sup>Baldwin, pp. 181-182.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 182.



## APPENDIX II

The following is an excerpt from a forthcoming book by Henry Miller called Reflections (Santa Barbara, California: Capra Press, 1981). It appeared as an article entitled "On Women," in Oui Magazine (August, 1981). Of particular interest to this study are Miller's reflections concerning Nin:

When people praise Anaïs to the heavens as if she were some kind of saint, it puts me in a devilish mood. I don't think I'm being cold; it's just that I've become impatient with all this talk about her 'goodness.' She wasn't made of pure sugar, and I'm happy to say it.

It was Anaïs' foibles and eccentricities, the darker elements, that intrigued me most. Though I'd be the first in line to praise those sterling qualities, I'd have to say the other side of her is what made her human, vulnerable, and all the more lovable in my eyes.

When we were first introduced in Paris, it was an immediate, if not an explosive, reaction. We were utterly taken with one another.

Anaïs was burning to live. She was bored stiff by her super-middle-class existence and her marriage to a nice, but rather conservative, businessman.

My wife, June, was visiting me at irregular intervals in Paris, but our relationship was on its last legs. We tried to iron things out, but it was too tempestuous to last. We were driving each other crazy.

And here was this beautiful woman, Anaïs Nin, who was becoming more and more a part of my 'new' life, my Parisian life, and she was opening herself up to me like a flower starving for water.

With Anaïs, I felt safe, secure. She delighted in keeping things running smoothly so I could write. She was really a true guardian angel, supportive and enthusiastic about my writing at a time when I needed it most. She was generous, too. Kept me going with little gifts--pocket money, cigarettes, food and so on. She sang my praises to the world long before I'd become regarded as a writer. In fact, it was Anaïs who paid for the first printing of Tropic of Cancer. For these reasons, I feel utterly grateful to her.

It's rare to find a friend, a confidante, a colleague, a helpmate and a lover all in the same person. We were good for each other; we stimulated each other; and we fought, too. I don't mean brawling or slapping each other around. Anaïs never raised her voice. She wasn't volatile the way June was. We simply disagreed on a few things. It wasn't a matter of a lack of communication. It's just that she had her opinions, and I had mine.

Anaïs was overly concerned with what people would think or how they'd react if she told the complete truth about her-

self. She spent untold hours cutting everything from her diaries that might raise a few eyebrows. She was preoccupied with creating an image that would make everyone love her and think only good things about her, which was ridiculous, impossible. But just wait! When her beloved fans finally get their hands on those uncensored manuscripts, an entirely different personality will emerge. 'Saint Anaïs' will be laid to rest at last, and the real woman, Anaïs Nin, will be born again.

You know, Anaïs held me up as a kind of symbol for the life she longed to embrace, the life she was hungering for. When she goes on in her diaries about her bohemian existence, I can tell you that she misrepresented herself. She was very well provided for by her banker husband. He must have helped support a good number of Anaïs' bohemian friends. Her ability to be a double-dealer made her able to heap goodness and generosity on so many people.

One day I accused her of being unfair to him. Here we were, having this passionate affair right under his nose. I told her that I felt their relationship was a total sham, that she was using him, and asked her why she didn't leave if she wasn't happy with him. She looked me straight in the eye, and she said, 'If I left him, what would happen to my children? You can't expect me to abandon them, Henry.'

Her 'children.' Jesus! It seemed she considered her family and her circle of friends, myself included, to be her children. As if we were incapable of surviving without her. Christ! It sounded like she was doing charity work or something. It was that Lady Bountiful attitude of hers that made my blood boil.

And then she said, 'If you ever talk about the nature of my relationship with my husband again, I'll walk out that door and never come back.' Needless to say, Anaïs drove a hard bargain.

I'd say that Anaïs was motivated primarily by fear. The fear of seeing family and friends suffer or go without, the fear of being thought badly of, the fear of being unloved. She wanted to do the 'right' thing always. She wanted to be thought of as a good human being, an exemplary person. But in order for her to demonstrate this 'goodness,' she had to put her demons, her trickster, to work for her.

I'm simply not impressed by, nor am I interested in the do-gooders. I've always had the closest and most intense relationships with mischief-makers. Anaïs fell into this category in a roundabout sort of way. Lying and cheating were the sacrifices she made in order to help others to better their own lives. She certainly made many sacrifices on my behalf; the debts I owe her are virtually unrepayable. But allow me to set the record straight once and for all. Though she may have set herself up to be a martyr, and though she was, in the end, a true guardian angel, Anaïs Nin, in my mind, never made it to sainthood.

### APPENDIX III

Incidentally, a rather intriguing comparison may be drawn between the life and art of Anaïs Nin and one of her precursors, Virginia Woolf. Unlike Nin, however, Virginia Woolf was not so much concerned with the multitude of relationships possible with members of one's own sex as she was absorbed in an exploration of the way in which men and women may learn to function together rather than as separate entities. In her eyes, the sexes ought to become the best of friends rather than the worst of enemies. The way to achieve this external balance was to first reconcile the masculine and feminine sides within the individual:

When the individual learns to cultivate both masculine and feminine sides of his mind he approaches unity of being. Wholeness--integration of the personality--is the ultimate goal, and the symbol Virginia Woolf uses to represent this ideal condition is the androgynous mind, the mind in which masculine and feminine elements attain a perfect balance.<sup>1</sup>

In her recent book, Androgyny: Toward A New Theory of Sexuality, Jungian psychoanalyst June Singer provides further information regarding the matter of androgyny:

...in its broadest sense [androgyny] can be defined as the One which contains the Two; namely, the male (andro) and the female (gyne).... Beyond the contest for dominance, beyond the polarization of masculine consciousness and feminine consciousness, lies the intuition that there must be something else, a further development in human consciousness....

The androgyne will not be discovered by turning outward into the world, but by turning inward into ourselves. It is a subtle body, that is to say 'non-material,' buried in the deep unconscious realm that all humans collectively share. The collective unconscious yields up its

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<sup>1</sup>Herbert Marder, Feminism and Art (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1963), p. 3.

treasures slowly. The androgyne rests in its murky depths and will not easily be imagined, let alone comprehended. It rarely enters awareness, or if it does, it is usually repressed and for two important reasons. First, androgyny is a state of consciousness that is far from ordinary, and therefore it threatens many people's state of equilibrium. Second, androgyny threatens many presuppositions about individual's identity as men or as women, and hence threatens the security of those people, including most of us, who have vested interests in the conventional attitudes towards sex (maleness and femaleness) and gender (masculinity and femininity).<sup>2</sup>

Nevertheless, in 1981, the theory of androgyny is gaining considerable acceptance as an ideal concept which permits freedom from gender-role stereotypes and allows people to express their opposite-gender tendencies. Now women, for example, may nurture not only the "stereotypically feminine" qualities of loyalty, affection, sensitivity, compassion, and tenderness, but also the "stereotypically masculine" qualities of self-reliance, assertiveness, self-sufficiency, leadership ability, and strength.<sup>3</sup>

However, it is important to keep in mind that Virginia Woolf addressed herself to the androgynous ideal as early as 1928 when she wrote A Room Of One's Own, a book which in many ways may be called a feminist tract. In the sixth chapter, Woolf arrives at her discussion of androgyny, particularly the way in which it is a "strain" to think of "one sex as distinct from the other... it interferes with the unity of the

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<sup>2</sup>June Singer, Androgyny: Towards A New Theory of Sexuality (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1977), pp. 6, 10-11.

<sup>3</sup>These qualities are taken from the Bem Sex Role Inventory. See Half The Human Experience: The Psychology of Women, edited by Janet Shibley Hyde and B. G. Rosenberg (Toronto: D. C. Heath and Company, 1980), p. 65. See also Chapter IV on "Femininity, Masculinity, and Androgyny," pp. 57-71.

mind."<sup>4</sup> Woolf carries the matter further when she asks

whether there are two sexes in the mind corresponding to the two sexes in the body, and whether they also require to be united in order to get complete satisfaction and happiness? And I went on amateurishly to sketch a plan of the soul so that in each of us two powers preside, one male, one female; and in the man's brain the man predominates over the woman, and in the woman's brain the woman predominates over the man. The normal and comfortable state of being is that when the two live in harmony together, spiritually co-operating. If one is a man, still the woman part of his brain must have effect; and a woman also must have intercourse with the man in her. Coleridge perhaps meant this when he said that a great mind is androgynous.... Perhaps a mind that is purely masculine cannot create, any more than a mind that is purely feminine.<sup>5</sup>

To Woolf's way of thinking, then, the androgynous mind is "resonant and porous; that it transmits emotions with impediment; that it is naturally creative, incandescent and undivided."<sup>6</sup>

In her form of creativity, her fiction, Anaïs patterned a character after the woman she loved to please her: "I will make a great character out of you, June, I will make a portrait you will like" (I, 147); in Orlando, Virginia Woolf wrote what Nigel Nicolson has called "the greatest love letter in history"<sup>7</sup> for her friend and sometime lover, Vita Sackville-West. Although Virginia was married to Leonard Woolf, she had a love affair with Vita Sackville-West for a time from 1925 to 1927. As Nicolson reports,

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., pp. 93-94.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 94.

<sup>7</sup>Nigel Nicolson, ed., A Change of Perspective: The Letters of Virginia Woolf, Volume III: 1923-1928 (London: The Hogarth Press, 1977), xxii.

See also Portrait of a Marriage, edited by Nigel Nicolson (London: Futura Publications Limited, 1973), pp. 207-214 for a consideration of the love affair from Vita Sackville-West's point of view.

They loved each other. Set down those words and they provoke questions which their discreet letters do not answer directly. But the facts are clear from other sources, Vita's diary (not Virginia's), and her confessional letters to Harold. They slept together perhaps a dozen times, in Vita's house and in Virginia's while their husbands were away. It happened first at Long Barn, on 18 December 1925. Recollecting the scene three years later, Virginia wrote to Vita: 'The night you were snared, that winter, at Long Barn, you slipped out Lord Steyne's paper knife, and I had then to make the terms plain: with this knife you will gash our hearts I said'(1976). There was no gash, either then, nor at any later time. Vita was entranced; Virginia was curiously unalarmed. When Vita once threatened to leave a Hampshire house-party at midnight, drive to Rodmell, accost Virginia by throwing gravel at the window, and drive back in the dawn, Virginia sent a telegram 'Come then'(1774). She found it flattering to be thought, at 45, desirable by so glamorous a woman, ten years her junior. She felt neither shock, nor self-reproach, never feared that Leonard would think her treacherous, for he knew, as Harold knew, that there was no threat to either marriage.<sup>8</sup>

While their love affair was winding down, Woolf conceived an idea for a story to be called "The Jessamy Brides," about "two women, poor, solitary, at the top of a house." In her diary for 14 March 1927, Woolf describes what she planned for her tale; for our purposes, one element becomes important: "Sapphism is to be suggested."<sup>9</sup> "The Jessamy Brides" never materialized, but Orlando did. Woolf took the story of her dear friend Vita and transformed it into fiction.

It was her most elaborate love-letter, rendering Vita androgynous and immortal: it transformed her story into a myth, gave her back to Knole. Without shame on either side, she identified Vita<sup>10</sup> as her model by the dedication and the photographs.

Photographs appeared in the first published edition of Orlando; the photograph of "Orlando" was actually a portrait of Vita.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>8</sup>Nicolson, ed., A Change of Perspective, xxi-xxii.

<sup>9</sup>Woolf, A Writer's Diary, p. 108.

<sup>10</sup>Nicolson, xxii.

<sup>11</sup>Woolf, Letters: Volume III, p. 434.

Her impassioned thank you note to Virginia for Orlando is a love letter in its own right. Here is a fragment:

For the moment, I can't say anything except that I am completely dazzled, bewitched, enchanted, under a spell. It seems to me the loveliest, wisest, richest book that I have ever read--excelling even your own Lighthouse.<sup>12</sup>

This letter becomes a valuable document in light of the fact that it provides a record of Vita's approval of Virginia's literary efforts. Whether June Miller ever approved of her fictional portrait is uncertain; there seems to be no such record. \_\_\_\_\_

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 573.

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#### VITA AUCTORIS

Brenda Audrey Ingratta was born on February 15, 1957 and grew up on a farm in Rodney, Ontario. She graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Honours English Language and Literature from the University of Windsor on June 2, 1979. During her Master's candidacy, she worked as a teaching assistant from 1979-1981, and was a member of the English Departmental Council from 1980-1981. She and Dr. Colin B. Atkinson were primarily responsible for the introduction of English 301: Female Images in Literature to the General Calendar at the University of Windsor in 1980. The course was taught during the Winter term of 1981, and is offered again in the Winter term of 1982.

Her novel, Shadows of the Night, was privately printed in a limited edition of 500 copies in 1972. She has since then kept a journal which she admits is an ingrained, life-long habit. A guitarist and vocalist, she has sung with her twin sister, Barbara, at a number of weddings and social gatherings, and with Harry Chapin at a concert on February 26, 1980. Her photographic portraits of Margaret Atwood and Irving Layton hang at South Shore Books, 164 Pitt Street West, Windsor, Ontario. She is presently at work on another novel.